

northeast carwasher



**NRCC, Innovative Control Systems
Team Up to Restore the 'Jersey Shore**

**Carwash Lending Reflects
Economic Recovery**

**Jeep SUA Issue
Still Unresolved**

Carwash Business Exit Strategies

**Tom Ledbetter is a featured
speaker at the NRCC!*

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Fall 2013

Vol. 18 No. 4

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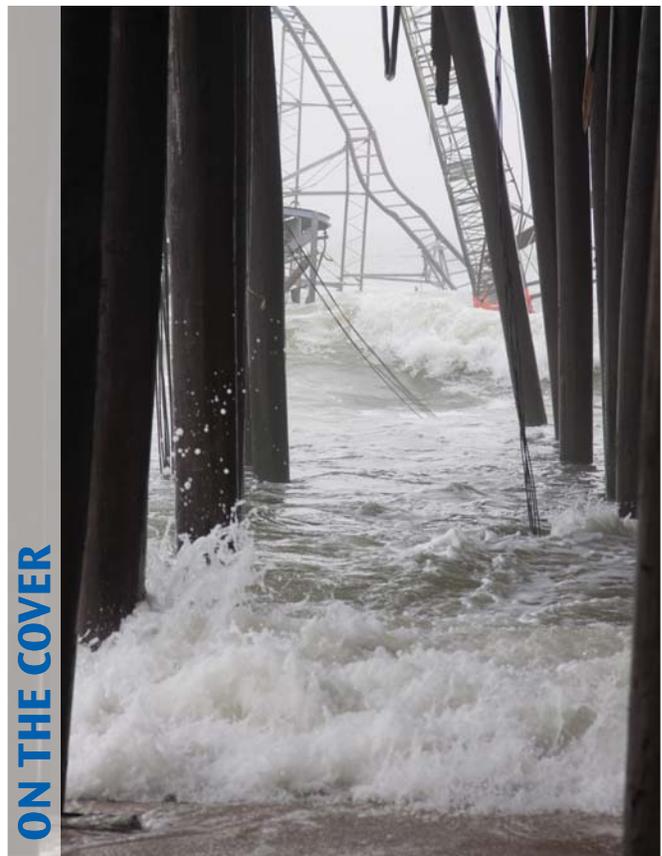
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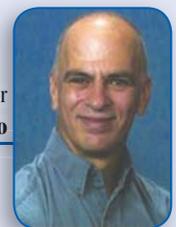


On the cover: Photo courtesy of Shutterstock and taken at the Jersey shore after Hurricane Sandy.

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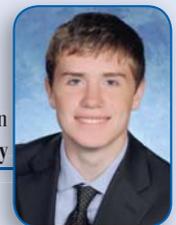
Editor and Publisher
Suzanne L. Stansbury



Contributing Editor
Alan M. Petrillo



Art Director
Katherine Watson



Intern
Alex Stansbury

Please direct advertising and editorial inquiries to:
Media Solutions, 2214 Budd Terrace, Niskayuna, NY 12309
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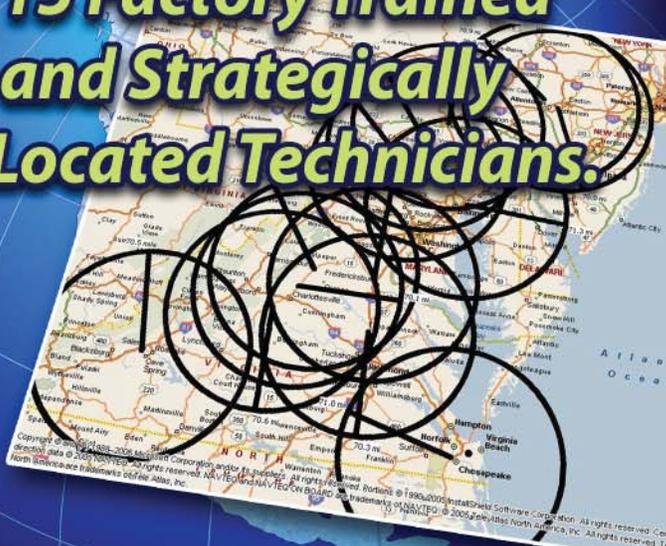


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It's difficult to comprehend that there are still people displaced from their homes and waiting for financial aid as a result of the wrath of Hurricane Sandy. As you know, the second most costly hurricane in US history hit land on October 29 near Brigantine, NJ, just northeast of Atlantic City, and roared its way up the East Coast as a Category 3 hurricane.

That was nearly a year ago and there are still people waiting for federal aid, unable to rebuild what was taken from them on that storied, destructive day. That is why the Northeast Regional Carwash Convention's (NRCC) host, the Car Wash Operators of New Jersey (CWONJ), decided to get involved with Hometown Heroes to "Restore the Shore" at this year's Opening Night Event, Tuesday, October 8. The two-hour event, co-sponsored by the great team at Innovative Control Systems, Wind Gap, PA, begins at 7pm. It will include raffles, a silent auction and straight donations to raise much needed funds for those affected.

Let me tell you about this organization and its mission. Hometown Heroes is a charity in New Jersey whose main purpose is to foster an environment of goodwill, generosity and encouragement by supporting local communities in times of crisis. They provide an opportunity for all of us to give back to our neighbors through professional services, financial help and advocacy. Hometown Heroes assists those in need to find solutions to problems that appear overwhelming after a disaster has impacted their life. This New Jersey non-profit, a registered 501c(3), has supported those impacted by Hurricane Sandy through the Restore the Shore campaign, as well as providing assistance for individuals facing homelessness, domestic abuse, drug addition, disability and much more. Hometown Heroes is an incorporated organization and was founded in 2008 to provide assistance to the community at large and help any individual or family regardless of ethnicity, gender and age who suddenly finds themselves in crisis. One hundred percent of all proceeds, and all donated goods, are put to work in coastal New Jersey, in the communities most affected by the storm.

The great work this organization is doing means so much to so many, including our own Doug Rieck of Magic Wash in Manahawkin. His home was severely compromised by the storm and to date he is still not back in it. The good work of Hometown Heroes and Restore the Shore, however, has come his way and he is more than grateful for their efforts.

So, please make every effort to come out to the event on Tuesday, October 8 at the Hard Rock in the Trump Taj Mahal at 7pm. Tickets are \$100 and include an open bar of beer and wine, as well as heavy hors d'oeuvres. Bring your spirit of generosity and your checkbook and support those less fortunate in our silent auction, raffles or with a straight donation. I hope to see you there!



Suzanne L. Stansbury

Suzanne L. Stansbury
Editor/Publisher

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Dear Editor,

I read with great emotion your interview with Mike Mountz in the Spring issue. I am one of the many who silently admired him for his guts, his unbridled optimism and his magnificent endeavors. He did what many of us want to, but caution prevents us. He saw what others had done, and improved on it. He saw concepts that might work and with unbridled enthusiasm embraced it. He was in many ways the Joseph Enning of the 1990's (2000).

When Dr. Enning built Taj Mahal's in the 1980's, the rest of the washes were dark, dingy and smelly. We convinced each other that was a part of the way we were. Joe (Enning) changed that. In so many ways, Mike did that also. The scale of the projects - the innovation, the incredible attention to detail - in every nook and cranny of the operation. Each time I visited I swore I would improve my own business to be more like his. It was good to have a beacon like that.

Now to your gripping and amazing article. You ought to write more, not just opinion pieces, but interviews! This was such a caring and compassionate detailed presentation that reflected exactly who Mike Mountz was - his strengths, his weaknesses, but most of all his character and his desire to bring forth something that would engage his employees, please his customers and guide our industry. I have read it five times! Our industry is collapsing into a stereotypical chain operation. Each time someone like Mike leaves, more mediocrity and less innovation results. I know that managing a large chain requires discipline. It cannot be operated by emotion or bravado and standardization is the key to success. This is what has happened in every industry, but in the process we loose a lot. So I was thinking, why don't you begin interviewing some of those who were/are amazing trendsetters, operators, supplier, friends and encouragers before they pass away or disapper? Meanwhile, thanks for a beautiful tribute to someone who was a major league player in our industry.

Tony DeLange
WashWorks
Baltimore, MD

Do you have an opinion or view you want to share with our readers?

Send your thoughts to:
Editor, *Northeast Carwasher*
2214 Budd Terrace, Niskayuna, NY 12309
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WASH VOLUME INDEX

We have taken the pulse of four East Coast operators to see where their volumes are compared to last year (YTD). For July 2012 to July 2013 we're happy to report that volumes are up with a high of +21.6 in the Poconos and a low of +1.0 in the Mid-Atlantic.



Thanks to Doug Rieck on the Jersey shore; Dave DuGoff in the Mid-Atlantic; Ron Bousquet in Boston and Kevin Detrick in the Poconos. ■



Periodically, we will recommend books our staff and readers believe have value for our readership. You might want to check out these great motivational books.

- ❖ “Renegades Write the Rules: How the Digital Royalty Use Social Media to Innovate,” by Amy Jo Martin.
- ❖ “Heart, Smarts, Guts, and Luck: What It Takes to Be an entrepreneur and Build a Great Business,” by Anthony K. Tjan, Richard J. Harrington, Tsum-Yan Hsieh.
- ❖ “The Click Moment: Seizing Opportunity in an Unpredictable World,” by Frans Johansson.

If you have read anything notable, please share it with us at mediasolutions@nycap.rr.com! ■

Site on the Mind



The College Park Car Wash of College Park, MD, gives its customers an easy way to access the information about their wash on a nice blue-and-white schemed website that is easy to navigate. The site sets itself apart through the break down of the carwash's special token deal. This unique deal allows customers to obtain free tokens by offering a “buy five get one free” deal on the tokens.

The site gives clear contact information for any comments, ideas or questions and provides an easy-to-use link that goes right to their Facebook page. The site even offers helpful tips such as how to avoid ruining your car's finish.

There is certainly a lot of useful information on the page and about the wash, including the statement that it is the “Best Self-Serve Car Wash in Maryland.” Hum. We think it just might be based on its website!

To learn more visit them at www.us1carwash.com ■

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**RYKO SOLUTIONS APPOINTS
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CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER**



Ryko Solutions, Inc., Grimes, IA, North America's largest provider of carwash equipment, cleaning solutions and technical service, has appointed Jesse Wurth to be Chief Financial Officer, responsible for the direction of all corporate accounting and financial functions including the recently acquired operations of MacNeil Wash Systems in Barrie, Ontario, Canada.

Wurth joins Ryko from The Weitz Company, a highly services oriented construction management company with offices throughout the United States, where he served as Vice President of Finance. With Weitz, he was recognized for his leadership in bringing together the diverse operational and IT groups within the company around an effort to realize greater profits for the business by forging efficiencies and leveraging new technologies. In his 15 years of financial advisory and management experience, Wurth has also worked with McGladrey LLP. A resident of Urbandale, IA, he holds a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Northern Iowa with honors in Accounting and is a CPA. ■

For more information visit www.ryko.com

SONNY'S RECEIVES PARTNER OF THE YEAR AWARD

Paul Fazio, CEO of Sonny's Enterprises, Inc., Tamarac, FL, proudly

accepted the Broward County public schools Project-Based Learning Partnership Award during the Community Involvement Award's Ceremony held on April 10. As an educational partner since 2004 to the FIRST Robotics team and the Machining Apprenticeship Program at the Atlantic Technical Center and Technical High School, Sonny's employees served as mentors while providing professional, hands-on training to students.

The FIRST Robotics team builds robots for competitive events that have resulted in numerous regional and state awards being received. The original nine-team members from 2004 now hold undergraduate degrees with five being in the field of engineering. The team now averages 25 members who, like their predecessors, are pursuing degrees in the fields of Science and Engineering.

As the largest apprenticeship program in the state of Florida, the Machining Apprenticeship program trains 30 local individuals each year. Within the last five years, 100 percent of the students who completed the Machining and Drafting programs pursued their undergraduate degrees – with 76 percent selecting engineering as their major.

"The depth of knowledge and talent these young professionals have is amazing," said Paul Fazio. "We are truly honored to work with such outstanding individuals. Sonny's is proud of the accomplishments the students in these two outstanding programs have achieved and fully supports preparing today's youth for tomorrow's challenging workforce." ■

For more information visit www.sonnysdirect.com

COLEMAN HANNA ANNOUNCES PERSONNEL CHANGES

Jean de Negri, Ted Winchester and Wayne Smith have all been named to key positions at Coleman Hanna, Houston, TX, according to a company press release.

The release stated that Negri will

serve as international sales manager, Winchester will be vice president of sales and marketing and Smith will serve as vice president of national accounts and distributor development.

Negri, who speaks five languages, "has an extensive history working with diverse people from all over the world," said the release.

Winchester, who has been involved in the carwash industry for more than 40 years, is a "strong leader and will be a great fit for our sales and marketing team."

And Smith, who has nearly 40 years of sales experience within the petroleum industry, previously worked for Hanna-Sherman. ■

To learn more visit www.colemanhanna.com

MACNEIL WASH SYSTEMS NAMES JOHN SORENSON CENTRAL REGIONAL SALES MANAGER



MacNeil Wash Systems, Barrie, Ontario, Canada, the 30-year leader in conveyor carwash engineering now supported by its parent company Ryko Solutions, the largest manufacturer of carwash systems in the world, has appointed John Sorenson Central Regional Sales Manager. Sorenson will be responsible for supporting MacNeil's distributor and sales network throughout the central region of the United States.

Sorenson has an impressive background in the carwash industry, including 15 years as General Manager of Arizona Car Wash Systems where he suc-

Continued on page 12...

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Newsworthy ... continued from page 10.

cessfully led the company's sales growth, strategic planning, project development and management of daily operations, according to a company press release. ■

For more information visit macneilwash.com

BLENDCO SYSTEMS ANNOUNCES NEW SALES MANAGER

Blendco Systems, Bristol, PA, has appointed Bill Carbonel to its team of tunnel sales managers as its West Coast representative. A Sacramento native, Carbonel has owned and operated carwashes in California for more than 20 years. He served on the Board of the Western Carwash Association for 10 years and as President for two of those years.

Carbonel will work with existing distributors on the West Coast on growing their tunnel business while continuing to expand Blendco's overall tunnel presence in the western states. ■

To learn more visit www.blendco.com

PDQ, DOVER MAKE DONATIONS TO MAKE-A-WISH®/SERVICE LEAGUE OF GREEN BAY

As part of its continuing efforts to assist in the charitable work of organizations that serve local communities and residents, PDQ Manufacturing, Inc., De Pere, WI, a leading manufacturer of in-bay automatic vehicle wash systems, made a \$5,500 donation to Make-A-Wish® Foundation of Wisconsin. That amount was matched by the Dover Foundation, which is the charitable arm of PDQ's parent company, Dover Corporation, for a total donation of \$10,000. The Make-A-Wish® Foundation grants wishes of children who have been diagnosed with life-threatening medical conditions.

In 2010, PDQ created a charitable-donation policy for its employees. This policy allocates money to each employee with those funds able to be

disbursed to charities on their behalf. As part of that policy, PDQ makes periodic donations to local charitable organizations, such as the Make-A-Wish® Foundation of Wisconsin.

The company has also made a donation for the fourth year to the Service League of Green Bay's Back-To-School Store program, according to a company press release. The Service League of Green Bay is a charitable organization that aims to meet the physical, educational and emotional needs of the children of Brown County by providing volunteer hours and financial support. Each year the Back-To-School Store program, founded in 1993, provides more than 1,500 elementary school children in grades K-5 with the tools to succeed in the classroom.

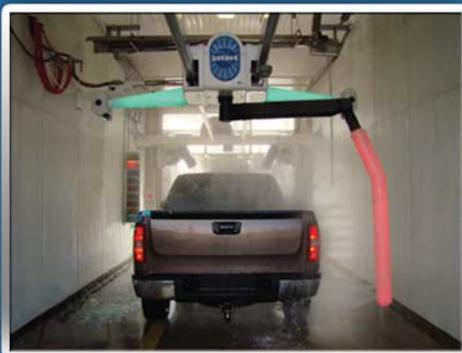
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NRCC, Innovative Control Systems Team Up to Restore the 'Jersey Shore

By Alan M. Petrillo

Delay, red tape and bureaucracy are the three most pressing issues facing Doug Rieck in rebuilding his home in Brandt Beach, NJ, on Long Beach Island, which was compromised by Hurricane Sandy last October. But a partnership between the Northeast Regional Carwash Convention (NRCC), Innovative Control Systems and Hometown Heroes, a Toms River, NJ, non-profit group created to gather donations and raise funds for the relief effort on the 'Jersey shore and for other people in crisis, promises to channel much needed funds to those people who still haven't been able to return to their homes.



The bustling Jersey Shore was a ghost town after Hurricane Sandy hit in late October of 2012. Nearly a year later, much has been accomplished, but much still needs to be done. Join forces with the NRCC and Innovative Control Systems on October 8 to help "Restore the Shore" by attending a fundraiser at the Hard Rock Café in the Trump Taj Mahal at 7pm. To register call 800/868-8590 today!



The 24th NRCC, hosted this year by the Car Wash Operators of New Jersey, runs October 7-9 in the Trump Taj Mahal Hotel & Casino in Atlantic City. The convention's opening night reception will feature a fundraiser to benefit the Hometown Heroes' Restore the Shore efforts.

NRCC's goal is to raise \$10,000 through raffles and a silent auction, as well as direct donations, at the reception on October 8 from 7 to 9 pm at the Hard Rock Café in the Trump Taj Mahal.

Michael Schwartz, president of Hometown Heroes, said his group helps those in need through financial and professional assistance, as well as advocacy.

"A lot of people in the areas affected by Hurricane Sandy are moving back in now and their homes need new heating systems, electrical systems, roofs and other things," Schwartz said. "In the eight months since Sandy hit, we've received more than

Continued on page 16...



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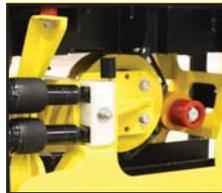


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Restore the Shore ... *continued from page 14.*

1800 applications for assistance, and \$1.5 million has either gone out to people or been earmarked for the 'Jersey shore.'

Schwartz said affected individuals can apply for assistance by either calling the Hometown Heroes office at 732/473-9400 or going to www.USAhometownheroes.com.

"It's the people in the community who step up who are the heroes," Schwartz observed. "We're just the outlet to provide the resources."

Doug Rieck is the owner of Magic Wash, an express carwash with self-service bays, a dog wash and Laundromat in Manahawkin. While his carwash wasn't damaged badly by Hurricane Sandy beyond losing about nine days of business, Rieck's home on Long Beach Island wasn't so lucky.

"I live on a barrier island in a house built in 1966 by my parents," Rieck said. "It stands about three feet above ground and we've never had flooding in the past, but with Hurricane Sandy we had 18 inches of water on the first floor. If you stood on the ground, the water level would have been between your belt and your shoulders."

Hurricane Sandy washed away the entrance steps to Rieck's house, as well as an attached wood deck and hot tub. The contents of a garage and the concrete and brickwork were heavily damaged as well. The entire first floor of the home had to be stripped to the studs and floor joists — walls, plasterboard, hardwood floors and the rooms' contents.

"Finding contractors to do the work needed is not a problem because about 90 percent of Long Beach Island's population is part time," Rieck pointed out. "Our town, county and the state have been wonderful in helping. It's FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) that has been a maze of bureaucracy and some of their rulings have delayed work by months."

Rieck's house is on a concrete foundation, but only with a crawl space and no cellar. FEMA issued a modified flood elevation ruling in December 2012 that changed flood zones and required many houses to be raised on pilings, he said.

"We would have had to move the house with cranes while the concrete was yanked out and the pilings put in, and then put the house on them," he said. "It would have added months to the work and cost about \$30,000 more in construction. Then in May of this year, FEMA said they made a mistake and pilings were not needed. Fortunately, we hadn't done the work yet, but we had to go back to the architect and make revisions to show the house going back on a foundation and adding concrete block walls."

Rieck said his house is covered under a federal flood insurance program for water damage and under his homeowner's insurance policy for wind damage.

"My contractor did the house next door, which had a different insurance carrier than mine, and they received progress payments as the work progressed," Rieck said. "My insurance carrier waited until May (2013) to give me a payment and it was only 50 percent of what the contractor required."

Rieck and his family are in their fourth living location since the hurricane. First they stayed with his sister-in-law,

then at his mother-in-law's house, then in a friend's house for three months and now the family of four are occupying a rental home.

"We're at the nine-month point since Sandy right now," Rieck said. (At the time of this writing.) "We're waiting for bank loans to fund the rest of the construction. Once they come through, we expect to start work in August and get back into the house by Christmas."

Some good news for Rieck just surfaced. He was just told that the state's Sandy Homestead Program said he would now get a \$10,000 grant if he agrees to fix his home and live there for three years. In July he was told that the funding ran out.

Mike Conte is the owner of Conte's Car Wash, a full-service wash, two exterior tunnels and a self-service facility in Long Branch, along with carwashes in neighboring towns.

"None of our carwashes were affected by water, but my home, rental property and Laundromat I own were," Conte pointed out. "My house is nine feet above sea level and there was three feet of tidal water in the place. My rental property had five feet of water in it and four feet in the Laundromat."

Conte noted that one of his carwashes suffered damage to the building, its siding and an awning because of Sandy, but that his insurer, Selective Insurance, worked quickly with agent Mark Torellio of Beckerman Insurance Agency, to get things fixed.

"They worked with us on everything and did a good job for us," Conte said. "It cost \$70,000 to make the repairs."

At his Laundromat, Conte pointed out that he had installed \$200,000 worth of new equipment three months before Sandy hit.

"We had the Laundromat up and running five weeks after Sandy," Conte said. "We had to replace all the dryers, motors in the washers and lots of other equipment. We didn't have flood insurance, so we had to pay the \$150,000 for fixing the place. Now we're filing for business grants through the state of New Jersey to see if we qualify to apply the money toward the Laundromat."

Conte said it took until early July before he received the green light to work on rebuilding his home.

"FEMA requires that you get their approval before you start any repair work on the house," he said. "You can only start work after they give you their approval. My house was gutted down to the studs right after we were able to get back into the place, and it took them this long to approve the work to fix it."

But Conte is philosophical about the entire process.

"When this is done, I will write a book about it and it will be a comedy," he said. "You have to shake your head and laugh at how much the feds have been a roadblock in getting things done." ■

Alan M. Petrillo is a freelance journalist based in Tucson, AZ, a former upstate New Yorker, and contributing editor of Northeast Carwasher. He is the author of the historical mystery, Full Moon, several books on historical military firearms, and the nonfiction work, Ice Hockey in the Desert.



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Jeep Cherokee SUA Issue Continues To Be Unresolved

By Alan M. Petrillo

Jeep Grand Cherokee models continue to cause problems for carwash operators, with a number of sudden unintended acceleration (SUA) events occurring around the country at a variety of carwashes.

Robert Breahaut, owner of Minute Car Wash in Newburg, NY, recently had a SUA incident with a 2006 Jeep Grand Cherokee that was being driven off of the full-service carwash's 140-foot conveyor.

"The carwash manager was in the vehicle to move it to our detail bay," Breahaut said, "when the vehicle took off on him like a bolt of lightning. The manager turned sharply to the right, sideswiped a minibus and after slamming on the brakes many times finally got the vehicle stopped 500 feet up the road."

The manager, John Xidiaris, a six-year veteran in the carwash industry, jumped out of the vehicle, only to be confronted by a New York State Police trooper who witnessed the event. "The trooper told John to get back in the car, but he told the cop he didn't want to because of the problem with the vehicle," Breahaut said. "The cop later said he saw John's eyes bulging out of his head, so the trooper knew he was scared."

*Sudden Unintended Acceleration (SUA) has also been linked to other vehicles including the Audi 5000 (model years 1982-1987) as well as the Toyota Corolla, Tacoma, Avalon, Matrix and Pontiac Vibe (model year 1009-2010), the Honda Accord (model year 1986), Kia Amanti and Sephia (model year 2005), as well as the Ford Mustang Cobra (2004 model year) and Explorer. This list is not meant to be complete, but an example of vehicles that may have been responsible for SUA incidents.

Xidiaris called the episode "one of the scariest moments of my life." He added that he was shaken up for a couple of hours afterward.

"When I went to move the Jeep, I put it from neutral into drive and the car went out of control," he said. "I gripped the wheel and was pumping the brakes, but that didn't do anything. I was actually going faster than the minibus, about 40 miles and hour. After I finally got the Jeep stopped, I put it in park and the motor was still revving at about 4,500 rpms. I will never drive one of those again."

Xidiaris said the trooper did not write him a citation. "He also checked the vehicle and saw that the mat was not on the accelerator, it was under it as normal," Xidiaris said.

Breahaut noted that the owner of the Jeep Grand Cherokee is an unlimited carwash customer who washes his vehicle twice a week. This was the first SUA incident at Minute Car Wash, he said.

Some carwashes are not allowing Jeep Grand Cherokees to go through their tunnels. Earlier this year, the Waterway Carwash chain in St. Louis, Kansas City, Denver and Cleveland, banned those vehicles from its washes. At the time, Waterway spokesman Mike Schlote issued this statement, "Waterway has experienced an unacceptable number of dangerous and

SUA Vehicle Handling Best Practices

The International Carwash Association (ICA) offers a Best Practices checklist to avoid Sudden Unintended Acceleration (SUA) incidents.

Entrance Care

1. Have only experienced employees or customer-owners operate vehicles.
2. Have employees wear seatbelts when operating vehicles.

Washing Care

1. Provide sufficient conveyor spacing when washing.

Exit Care

1. Keep employees and customers to the side or behind vehicles.
2. Honk the horn prior to moving the vehicle from the conveyor in order to alert employees.
3. After exiting the conveyor, place the vehicle in park and engage the emergency brake.
4. Fully depress the brake pedal, and visually verify.
5. Start the engine.
6. Watch the tachometer and wait for engine speed to decline after ignition.
7. Release the emergency brake.
8. Place one hand on the ignition and the other hand on the gear shift.
9. Shift into drive and, if necessary due to unintended acceleration, turn off the engine immediately.
10. Slowly release the foot brake and proceed. ■

Continued on page 20...

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costly accidents involving pre-2011 Jeep Cherokees and Grand Cherokees. At Waterway, employee and customer safety is our chief concern. Therefore, we have made the decision to stop washing these vehicles.”

When contacted for this article, a Waterway spokesman declined to comment.

Al Villani, owner of Supreme Car Wash in Newark, NJ, had an incident with a Jeep Grand Cherokee three years ago.

“We’re an exterior-only carwash with a 100-foot conveyor where the end of the conveyor is 20 feet inside of the tunnel,” Villani said. “As the customer started the car and put the Jeep into drive from neutral, the vehicle suddenly accelerated out of the exit end of the building, hit two employees and dragged them 30 feet to the street, then across the street (a three-lane road with lane-width shoulders) to a bridge abutment where the vehicle crashed against the wall. The vehicle traveled at least 100 feet before hitting that wall.”

Villani noted that his partner was at the carwash’s exit end when the event occurred. “He told me later the engine was screaming like it was a runaway,” Villani said.

Villani said one of his employees was admitted in critical condition to a hospital intensive care unit (ICU) and died the next day, while the second employee was injured and treated at the hospital, but did not return to work after the accident. The driver of the vehicle was in the ICU for several months and died there.

“The police were called and took a report, but they didn’t determine the cause of the sudden acceleration,” Villani noted. “Workers compensation became involved and covered the employees and their medical bills, but nothing else was paid out by our insurance company on the liability side and the case was closed.”

However, that wasn’t the end of it, Villani said. “As a result of the accident, we had an OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) inspection and investigation,” Villani said. “Their recommendation was to put yellow barrels along the curb at the exit end and also to install an illuminated flashing sign saying ‘Slow’ and ‘Go’ at the exit end of the tunnel.”

Villani said he installed the barrels, but not the sign. “We’re in a bilingual area here and thought it would cause more confusion. So we put up a bilingual yellow and black sign that says ‘Proceed Slowly,’ and have all our employees wear orange tee shirts, sweatshirts or safety vests.” He continued, “They all are trained to stay up against the outside wall until the vehicle is at a complete stop at the drying end.”



The exit end of Supreme Car Wash in Newark, NJ, flows out to a three-lane road with a bridge abutment against the far side of the street.

Doug Newman of New Haven, CT, a former carwash owner who has operated five full-service carwashes in the state, has been chronicling Sudden Unintended Acceleration for nearly a dozen years, and makes his collected information available on a website, <https://sites.google.com/site/jeepgrandcherokeeeusa/>.

Newman says that Chrysler, the manufacturer of the Jeep Cherokee and Grand Cherokee, blames driver error and untrained carwash employees for the problems.

“It’s not a driver error or employee problem, it’s a problem with the vehicle, it’s an engineering thing,” Newman said. “The vehicle’s power train control module is operated by proprietary software and somehow it shorts out and puts the vehicle into wide open throttle so the vehicle takes off. There are reports of people stomping on the brakes but the vehicles don’t stop.”

Newman advised that carwashers have a couple of options when washing a Jeep Cherokee or Grand Cherokee.

“You can solve the problem by not washing them,” he said. “If you want to wash them, the vehicle should be put in park and started from park at the exit end and not started from neutral. Short of redesigning the vehicle, that’s the safest way of handling it and I know a lot of operators who deal with it that way.”

Chrysler representatives did not return phone calls or emails to comment for this article. ■

Alan M. Petrillo is a freelance journalist based in Tucson, AZ, a former upstate New Yorker, and contributing editor of Northeast Carwasher. He is the author of the historical mystery, Full Moon, several books on historical military firearms, and the nonfiction work, Ice Hockey in the Desert.

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Carwash Business Exit Strategies

By Tom Ledbetter, J.D., *LL.M

Tom Ledbetter will be a speaker at the Northeast Regional Carwash Convention (NRCC) at the Trump Taj Mahal Hotel & Casino in Atlantic City, October 9 at 9:15 am.

The biggest threat to carwash owner exit planning is procrastination and failure to have a plan. Most business owners, carwash owners included, think about exit planning (if they think about exit planning at all) in terms of getting the business ready to sell to an outside party. But in reality, only a fraction of owners will actually sell their business to a third party. According to Tom West, author of *The Complete Guide to Business Brokerage*, only about 20 percent of small business owners actually sell their businesses to third parties. The best alternative may be to sell to an inside purchaser. If no inside purchaser currently exists, such as a partner, key employee, son, daughter or other relative, the best option for a sole owner may be to “build his or her own buyer.”

Sally and Bill Wilson, not their real names, have been sole owners of a successful carwash business for several years and recently realized they needed an exit strategy. They tried to sell, but no qualified buyer offered them anything close to their asking price. Working six days a week tied them to the business and they needed relief. Since they had no co-owner, we suggested that they find their own successor and help him accumulate the funds necessary to finance the purchase in a few years. They found their “friendly buyer” who has become their manager and they are contributing monthly to a fund that is partly paid from his wages. As a side benefit, they now have the ability to leave the business from time to time as he has become a great employee while learning to become an owner.

“Baby Boomer” Carwash Owners

The Wilsons were born between 1946 and 1964 and are part of a demographic group referred to as “Baby Boomers.” Baby Boomers total approximately 75 million individuals, advises Ken Dychtwald, Ph. D, author of *The Age Wave*. The Baby Boomer group size alone has huge implications for Boomer business owners as they think about selling or transferring their companies. For Baby Boomer carwash owners, the demographic clock is ticking. Boomer demographics, the “Law of Supply and Demand,” are subject to the state of today’s merger and acquisition market, the current and historically low capital gains rate and the “Boomer Mindset,” which constitutes the “perfect storm” for Boomer owners. This means that if you and your business are ready to sell or transition, there are opportunities in selling your business now and significant dangers if you delay.

Simple math tells us the first Baby Boomer to become 62, a popular age for retirement dreams to start becoming a reality, was in 2008. Does that year ring a bell? In that year we experienced the most significant financial meltdown since the Great Depression! Now, five years later, in 2013, we are just beginning to see positive signs of growth in the U.S. economy. These early retiree wanna-bes are now 67 and millions more Baby Boomer business owners are joining them in the pre-retirement parade.

But they have another problem in which to deal. The Wilsons, as a married couple, have the actuarial possibility of living jointly for 30 or more years in retirement. That is, if they are age 67 today, it is likely that one of them will be alive after age 97 – assuming they don’t smoke and have average health issues. Their goal is to have enough money after their business exit to not outlive their money. That’s a tall order without a plan.

When Do You Start Thinking About An Exit Strategy?

Think backwards! That is, imagine for a moment that you are at the end of your business career and imagine what it would be like to be retired. Where would you like to live in retirement? What would you like to have happen? Would you like to leave your business with lots of cash and pay as few taxes as possible? Would you like the business to continue successfully, especially if the business is going to owe you money in the future as part of your buy-out plan? Now from that lofty point in the imaginary future – think backwards! That is backwards to the present day. Now, ask yourself, what do I have to do to achieve my business exit goal in the future on my timetable and on my terms?

Every business exit plan must begin with a clear understanding of the value of the business. The sale to an insider is no exception. In a sale to insiders, value is often determined with reference to business earnings before depreciation, amortization and taxes. The valuation firm, which may be their accounting firm, may also look to comparable sales if there are any in similar locations. An independent certified valuation may be required by the successor’s bank, and is highly recommended where the sale is to an immediate family member. Otherwise, the IRS may question whether a bargain purchase may be involved with resulting income or gift tax issues.

Next, the exit plan needs to be structured in a manner that protects the owner while permitting the buyers to be successful in business operations over a long period of time. It is rare for privately held business arrangements to be cash transactions. The payout can be owner-financed or financed through a bank or private source. A leveraged buyout uses the assets and cash flow of the business or external bank loan to collateralize a loan to buy the business. An earn-out can be used when the value

of the business is in question. A formula can provide additional payments to the seller as a percentage of sales.

Finally, the owner must address the subject of funding his chosen buyer. The most appropriate method of pre-funding the sale depends on the owner's goals and objectives and his aversion to risk. This discussion should be a team effort between the owner's accounting firm, lawyer, insurance advisor and transition consultant, or other advisor.

While business owners take risks every day, they may not relish risking their families' future financial security. The use of strategies to retain voting and operational control in the hands of the owner, and to shift operational business risk from the owner's shoulders to that of the successors gradually is highly recommended. Owners should stay in control of their companies until they receive the entire sale price, however the deal is structured.

Sole owners of a closely held carwash business have the same business continuation problems other closely held business owners have:

- ❖ To have the business provide income for the owner's family,
- ❖ To allow the business to help support the families of employees and
- ❖ To leave a family legacy either, by allowing the owner's family members to take over one day, or to turn the business into money at death or retirement.

These problems may be harder to solve, as they may not have the co-owners needed to implement traditional buy-sell planning. A resourceful financial professional will embrace opportunities to work with one-owner businesses. Creative strategies, often involving multiple approaches, can be rewarding for the business owner. ■

Tom Ledbetter is a co-author of Get Out Alive! – a guide to extracting full value from your business. His company, Business Transition Network, LLC, specializes in business succession and exit planning. Tom began his career as a tax lawyer in Philadelphia with a law degree from University of Michigan Law School and a Masters in Tax from Georgetown University Law School. You can reach him at 727/897-9151, mobile 610/389-201, or email at tomledbetter@gmail.com.



Tom Ledbetter



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Carwash Lending Reflects Positive Economic Recovery

By Michael Ford

After a number of tough years, carwash operators are starting to see some good signs of economic recovery. Over the past year, we have seen strong growth in the carwash market. A recent industry survey of conveyor carwash operators reported an increase in total gross revenue of more than 50 percent for year-end 2012 over 2011. Credit markets have eased and carwash operators are starting to replace old equipment, remodel and build new locations. Some indicators of continued growth are in New Home Sales, Capital Goods, Auto Sales, Jobs and Commercial Loans.

Key Indicators Show Positivity

New-home sales rose a seasonally adjusted 8.3 percent in June, and were up 38.1 percent from a year ago, the Commerce Department reported. Home construction, sales and prices have been growing since early last year. Americans purchased newly built homes in June at the fastest pace in five years. That's raised builder confidence to a seven-year high, which should lead to increases in construction and more jobs.

The government also released comprehensive revisions that updated the nation's gross domestic product, or GDP, over the last several decades. Those figures showed that the economy grew at a stronger 2.8 percent in 2012, up from an earlier estimate of 2.2 percent. Last year's first quarter was revised much higher, while the economy barely expanded in the fourth quarter. GDP is the broadest measure of the nation's output of goods and services, including everything from carwashes to industrial machinery.

Orders for capital goods are up, and June auto sales were the strongest since November 2007. Pointing to broader consumption growth, new jobs jumped in the second quarter in the small-business-sensitive household survey, and jobless claims have fallen to levels reached in 2004, the heart of the last recovery. While the job data can be deceiving because it does not account for those who have stopped looking for work, it is one of a number of overall positive indicators.

Commercial/Industrial Loans are UP

The value of commercial and industrial loans made by U.S. financial institutions has risen to record highs. This helped growth in credit pick up to 3.1 percent year-over-year from 1.4 percent in 2011 (after shrinking 2.5 percent in 2009 and 0.9 percent in 2010). Commercial and Industrial loans provide an important source of funds for equipment acquisitions, plant and facility upgrades, inventory and working capital for businesses.

Carwash Financing is Getting Easier

Approvals for carwash equipment, new construction,

remodel and refinance loans are on the rise. We here at Coast Commercial Credit have seen a 20 percent increase year over year in the number and types of loans approved for both new and experienced carwash operators.

Application-Only Equipment Finance

Application-only equipment finance has taken off as well. Lenders in the carwash market are now approving transactions for carwash equipment loans and leases up to \$300,000 based on just a one-page credit application and some bank information. The amount that can be approved for application-only financing is determined by time in business, personal credit score, bank balances/activity, and the business credit score. Compared to just three or four years ago, when lenders stopped funding carwash equipment under application-only programs, this is a very big step forward.

Full Disclosure Equipment Finance

Seasoned carwash operators looking for the best terms for larger dollar amount equipment loans are choosing to provide full financial disclosure. This allows the stronger applicants to show off their financial strength. Typically, the best terms are reserved for those who are financially strong and are willing to provide full financial disclosure. We have seen a number of requests in excess of \$500,000 for conversions from full-serve hand washes to fully automated express or flex washes. In addition, we are also seeing a marked increase in the credit quality of carwash equipment financing requests under the full disclosure finance program.

Start-Up Financing

For those looking to enter the carwash industry, loans are available for start-up operators. The Small Business Administration (SBA) 7a and 504 loan programs have become the primary source of funds for the carwash industry. Under the SBA guaranteed loan programs, both new and experienced operators can finance new carwash construction, equipment and carwash acquisitions.

SBA loans offer longer terms on loans to fund working capital, business start-up, equipment, business acquisition and real estate. SBA loans have terms up to 25 years and loan to values for carwashes of up to 80 percent for new investors and 85 percent for experienced operators.

Challenged Credit Financing

Financing is now available for carwash operators who have experienced some credit issues in the past. These financing programs are high rate working capital loans based on credit card receipts and bank balances. Typically, chal-

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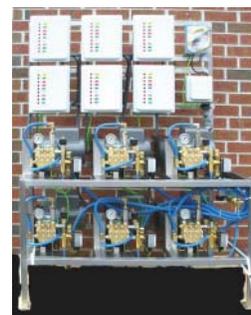
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Misery, Mediocrity or Magic?

By JoAnna Brandi

I was running a little late last week on my way to meet a client in Ormond Beach, FL. I was due there to do a Wisdom Circle at 1pm and I was hungry. That meant fast food.

I'm a bit of a health nut, so when the "usual suspects" are the only options open to me, I'm always a little concerned that there may not be something on the menu for me.

I saw a Chick-fil-A and my level of confidence rose. The moment I walked in the door I was delighted. There seemed to be a positive energy and buzz about it, not the usual frenetic lunchtime rushing. Everything looked clean and even the signage was refreshing. Smartly designed signs introduced their salad creations along with their calorie counts and I found my concern melt away.

After ordering my grilled chicken salad, the woman behind the counter asked kindly, "Do you really know what's IN that salad?"

"Chicken? Greens? It's a little hard for me to see the picture."

"More than that - just so you know - there's strawberries, blueberries and some strong blue cheese," she said. "Some people don't like that cheese."

"That's okay," I assured her. "I'm sure it will be perfect." And it was.

The salad was yummy and I was struck by the cleanliness of the place, even during the busy lunchtime rush. There were fresh flowers on every table and toward the end of my meal a young man delivered a hand wipe and a mint. I took out my phone to take a picture. Wow!

This is what a Moment of Magic looks like, I thought.

One of the many topics in our Customer Care Coach® training program teaches about turning Moments of Truth into Moments of Magic. Every time (and anytime) a customer has the opportunity to create a judgment about the quality of service they are receiving, a Moment of Truth occurs. At that moment the customer might feel that you have delivered any one of three things – Misery (Why are you making it so hard?) Mediocrity (Ho hum, this place is just like the rest) or a Moment of Magic (Wow! This place is really different! It makes me feel good to be here!)

How many moments of truth and opportunity occur every day in your business? 100? 200? 2,000? 20,000? Every single interaction a customer has with any aspect of your organization – the greeter, the cashier, the bathrooms, the signage, the send-off person, the lighting in your lobby - every moment of truth is an opportunity for you to make a positive and lasting impression on the customer. Every moment is an opportunity to say, "We CARE!"

Often the difference between a Moment of Mediocrity and a Moment of Magic is the kindness or attentiveness of a customer facing person, an empathetic tone of voice, a little

bit of extra help in explaining the wash options, a listening ear.

We distinguish ourselves one moment at a time. Jan Carlzon, author of "Moments of Truth" turned around a failing airline teaching that SAS Airlines could build their brand "15 seconds at a time" by using those moments to create a positive impression.

Take a look at the Moments of Truth in your organization – take a good look. Isolate the places where a simple adjustment might make all the difference in the world in how the customer perceives you and the value you deliver.

Go ahead – make the shift from mediocre to magical! ■



JoAnna Brandi

JoAnna Brandi is the author of "54 Ways to Stay Positive in a Changing, Challenging and Sometimes Negative World." You can learn more from JoAnna at Joanna@customercoach.com or visit www.ReturnOnHappiness.com.

Carwash Lending ... continued from page 24.

lended credit lenders offer loans up to 10 percent of annual credit card receipts. The repayment terms for these loans are usually six to 12 months. Payments are made by direct daily debit from the carwash business checking or merchant card account. These challenged credit programs give operators a second chance to get the funds they need to make much needed equipment and facility upgrades.

Looking Forward

Just a couple of years ago carwash owners were struggling to get financing. Two-thirds of privately held businesses said they were denied by banks when they applied for a loan, according to a Pepperdine University survey. Things have greatly changed since then. With the surge in the number of commercial loans being written, the increase in loan products available for carwash operators and the economy heading in the right direction, we are very optimistic about the future of the carwash industry. While the carwash industry is still recovering from the most recent recession, forecasts of continued economic growth bode well for the industry. ■



Michael Ford

Michael Ford is the Managing Director of Coast Commercial Credit, a national lender specializing in carwash finance. To learn more visit www.CoastCC.com or call 800/400-0365.



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No, Not the Weather, Again

By Doug Rieck

We all know and understand that one of the key drivers to profitability in our industry is the weather. Our customers, friends and even our employees fail to understand that fact. New investors to our industry often disregard this truth to their risk.

Rainouts are a curse and a blessing. When your conveyor needs some rollers replaced, rain is a wonderful thing. The rest of the time, at best it's a nuisance. What is as bad as rain, however, are cloudy days or the graphics on an iPhone weather App showing rain clouds for the next week. Unfortunately there is nothing that we can do about the consumer weather apprehension. It just is what it is. During my time in the industry, I feel that it has been aggravated by the availability of computer model forecasts, literally in

the palm of your hand.

This past spring and summer has been a mixed lot for carwashing with a lack of road salt in the winter in our market at least, and a pollen wash season cut short. The final blow being the record June and July rainfalls. In Philadelphia, (actually the weather station is in Mt. Holly, NJ) June brought an all-time June monthly record rainfall of more than 10 inches. Then July came breaking records again at more than 13 inches of rain. As a point of comparison, Hurricane Sandy brought a range of from two inches to a rare eight inches of rain, depending on your location in New Jersey, which makes you think.

Our temperate pleasant Northeast, from Boston to Maryland to Albany, usually averages from 38 inches to 45 inches

of annual rainfall. Albany being 38 inches and Boston and Philadelphia with 42 inches. As a point of comparison, Miami averages 58 inches of rain and Los Angeles 13 inches. These are all yearly averages. My point being that a month where you have 10 inches of rain, let alone 13, is a rarity even with Hurricanes factored into the equation. I usually think a fair approximation is that most months have from three to five inches of rain.

Sometimes the weather is just plain bad. In looking over weather records while writing this column, and reading the writings of others, I feel that normal climatic variability is at work. I subscribe to Weather Bell Analytics and read Joe Bastardi's predictions, our NRCC keynote speaker a few years back. He is big on long-term weather cycles. Currently, he is suggesting that we are on a cusp of a prolonged return of a considerably colder period. He tends to be a contrarian to the idea of global warming. What I do know is that my area of literacy is in washing cars and trying to earn a living.

If we as carwashes are going to wait for the return of the perfect winter, or the perfect pollen season to wash our record volumes, then we could end up with quite a long wait. In the meantime, there are bills to pay. That is one of the reasons I am waiting eagerly for the coming Northeast Regional Carwash Convention (NRCC) this fall so I can gather ideas and thoughts from other operators in the Northeast. One of the seminars I am anticipating is on wash clubs. It's called "The Pros and Cons of the Unlimited Wash Club." At my own wash I have had limited success with mine and am intending to leapfrog from that and take it up several notches. Please don't get me wrong, I'm delighted to get several thousand dollars a month automatically. It is just that I know I can do much more, with a little more effort.

I already have a gated-entry system with touch screens and I am in the process of transitioning over to on-screen club selling. I have seen several washes do this and the results are very good. The bottom line for a successful Wash Club to be profitable is having a point-of-sale (POS) system designed to handle them. In my opinion, it's not an option but a must have.



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Stay Current

I hate to spend money, specifically capital funds, especially in a tight economy, but the bottom line is that all of our equipment and computers that we rely on have limited lifespans. Technology changes rapidly, especially your control systems.

As your equipment ages, it does not perform as well as it once did. It starts having maintenance issues and most importantly your customer knows it is old. He may say he just wants a clean car, but he is lying. He wants the world, the best possible experience, and our retail society has trained him to go for the flashy new anything. Why do you think Apple, Walmart and Target are so successful in their retail stores, and Kmart and Sears so the same old, same old? In a conveyor you can confuse the issue and add new stuff and improve the experience, but in an in-bay automatic there is no getting around it. The machine itself is a vital part of the marketing.

One of the more important decisions that a carwash operator will make is his choice of computer and POS systems. We have become an information-centric economy and society. There is so much that can be done with computers and control today. Look at Detroit where the hottest item in new cars is not the engine but the Dashboard and audio control systems. There is so much that can be done.

The second part of this is that it very, very desirable if you have more than one location that all computer systems be in a family. I have learned the hard way on that point.

NRCC/ICS Team Up with Restore the Shore

The NRCC is getting close and I am very much looking forward to it. This year the opening reception has been moved to the show's first evening. It is being held at the Hard Rock right at the Taj on the Boardwalk. Hurricane Sandy has affected many, many people living and playing on the Jersey Shore and along the East Coast. I know because I am one of them. I do not expect to be back in my home until Christmas. I am blessed and fortunate and very aware that while I have lost my house, many have lost much more. It is

not just about a missing roller coaster, it is about thousands of people who have been hurt in many ways. Speaking from experience, Federal flood insurance does not cover much. The NRCC and Innovative Control Systems, Wind Gap, PA, have teamed up to work with Restore the Shore at this event to raise much needed funds for victims of the hurricane. Please come out and support the effort and help those less fortunate and those still in dire need of funds. The carwashing industry is a giving, caring bunch of entrepreneurs. Let's show the Jersey Shore and those affected how generous we can be. As an

area resident, I can assure you that your generosity will make a big difference. If you haven't registered yet for the NRCC, log onto www.nrccshow.com or call 800/868-8590 today! ■

Doug Rieck operates Magic Wash in Manahawkin, NJ, and is a past president of the Car Wash Operators of New Jersey. He also sits on the CWONJ and NRCC board of directors. You can reach him at 609/597-SUDS or dougrieck@gmail.com.



Doug Rieck

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How To Break In Your New Towels

By Valerie Sweeney

I know I have written articles in the past about break-in towels, but it is still one of the most popular topics of conversation among carwash operators. New managers and owners will often call and ask us the easiest way to break in their new towels. Here are some tips on how to get your towels up and running quickly and efficiently.

Terry Towels

Not that long ago, most terry towels sold to the carwash industry were from the seconds' market. These were towels that were bound for a retail store ("home" market), but due to either an imperfection or out of season colors, were taken out of the retail channels and sold to companies that would resell them in a different market (like carwashes). These towels were nice, but they were treated with a lot of "sizing." Sizing gives the towel a bright finish and stain resistance in the store. Many of the towels supplied to the carwash industry today do not have "sizing" (or very little), so it should be much easier to break in your towels.

The easiest way to break in a terry towel is to wash it in

hot water several times. If you do not have access to hot water, then bring them to a Laundromat or commercial laundry. Ideally, they should be washed for a minimum of eight minutes with a water temperature greater than 168 degrees. White and lighter color towels take less time to break in than darker towels, so those navy or hunter green towels might take a few more washings before they are ready to go. The fibers of a darker towel are saturated with dye. These fibers must be opened first before they become absorbent.

In order to prevent lint, you should always fully dry your new terry towels several times. Make sure to empty the lint trap with each load. When a towel is new, lint occurs as part of the natural shedding process. (Lint will also occur at the end of the towel's lifecycle, due to deterioration). You should always wash your new towels separately from your old ones because the lint from the old towels will transfer onto your new towels. Never use bleach or fabric softener with your towels. The fabric softer will make the towel softer, but it will reduce the towel's absorbency. Bleach aids in premature deterioration, and deterioration equals lint.

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Microfiber Towels

Technically, microfiber towels can be used right out of the package. You do not need to break them in to help with their absorbency. I do suggest, however, that you wash them once before using them, if possible. Just as with any textile, some fibers may have settled back down on the cloth during manufacturing, so washing them once will help rid the cloth of any residual lint or fibers.

Microfibers have very specific washing instructions, so make sure to follow the instructions on the tag or the package. Microfibers are washed on a cool/low setting, and either air dried, put in an extractor, or dried on the coolest setting. Microfiber can be washed with regular detergent, but never with fabric softener or bleach. The fabric softener will clog the fibers of the towel, and render it ineffective. Bleach is ok to use on a microfiber, but just like terry, it will shorten the life span of the towel (and it could also ruin the color). They absolutely should never be washed with terry towels, since the lint from terry will cling onto the microfiber.

Huck Towels

Huck towels also have a quick break-in period. If you buy recycled hucks, you can use them right out of the box. New huck towels should be washed a couple of times, but should be ready to use fairly quickly. These cloths are thin and the break-in period is short.

If you need further information on breaking in your towels, or with washing them, you should be able to either ask your towel vendor or your detergent supplier for helpful tips. ■



Valerie Sweeney is a towel consultant with ERC Wiping Products. You can reach her at 800/225-8473 or erc@ercwipe.com

Valerie Sweeney

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*Dear Venus and Mars,
When interviewing a potential employee, what do you look for and what tells you to keep looking?*



Linda Feriod

Venus Says

When hiring a new employee for a small business it is very important to make sure you hire the right person. If you pick the wrong person, and they become a problem with all your other employees, it can impact employee morale and customer retention. That is why I believe that attitude is everything, especially when hiring someone who will be interacting with customers. You can teach skills if an employee is willing to learn them, but to instill motivation, enthusiasm and teamwork is impossible. It has to already exist.

When interviewing a new employee strong eye contact is important to me. I feel that I am being told the truth when a potential employee maintains good eye contact. If he/she has a problem with eye contact, then I wonder if I am being told the truth. When asking this potential employee how he/she feels about doing duties that may not seem glamorous, and there is any hesitation, they probably are not going to be the right person for the job.

In a small business if the prospective employee requests a detailed job description they are waving a giant red flag as well. Employees are paid to work and complete whatever needs to be accomplished to make sure your customer leaves your location happy and satisfied. They should not be worried if the task that needs to be completed is in their job description or not.

Most positions at the carwash require customer interaction so an upbeat personality, and good manners, are extremely important and these traits should come through during the interview.

Customers expect a "thank you" and a smile when they leave your wash. When leaving the interview if the candidate doesn't thank you and leave wearing a smile, you should move on to the next applicant. ■



Paul Vallario

Mars Says

Employees are the heart of any carwash operation. Having the right or wrong employees can make or break a business. Although choosing the right person to hire for a particular position can be difficult, a good interview can help weed out the weaker candidates.

First off, when a potential employee shows up for an interview I look at their overall appearance. I think some people feel because they are applying to work at a carwash that their appearance is not important. I once had someone apply for a job while smoking a cigarette and drinking a soda. Obviously, I had to keep looking for someone to fill this position. If he didn't care enough to at least extinguish his cigarette before approaching me, how would he treat my customers?

I always want to know how the potential employee came to apply at my carwash for the job. Did they respond to an ad, did someone refer them or did they just take a shot and stop in? Also, I would like to know if they have any experience working in a carwash. Working in a carwash environment is not an easy job so knowing what brought them in can tell you if they are up for the job.

In my market, we deal with a lot of immigrant labor. So always during an interview I ask the potential employee for their work authorization. You would be amazed by the number of applicants who show up to an interview with no documentation whatsoever. If you can't prove that you are authorized to work in this country, then I cannot hire you.

Finally, I ask my applicant why they want to work in a carwash. Usually the answer is just something like, "I need a job." But every now and then someone will give a unique answer such as, "I really have a love for cars" or "cleaning is my passion and this job is for me." It may be a bunch of bologna, but I like the effort they give in their answer.

All in all, finding the right employees is one of the hardest things to do in any business. But asking the right questions and looking for certain things can sure make the process more successful. ■

Venus and Mars, aka Linda Feriod and Paul Vallario, are carwash industry veterans. Linda has worked in her family's carwashing business for 18 years. She has also been the President of the Penn/Del Carwash Association and has managed the Car Wash Operators of New Jersey. Paul Vallario operates Westbury Personal Touch Car Wash in Westbury, NY, and is the President of Urban Avenue Carwash Distributors and Consulting. He is a board member of the New York State Car Wash Association.

If you have a question for Venus & Mars please send it to:

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The Full-Serve Show Must Go On!

By Perry Powell

Over the last few years, I have spoken to several industry veterans who have lamented the loss of volumes that full-service washes experienced in the genesis of commercialized automated carwashing.

In those days, full-service carwashes were regularly getting volumes that are experienced in better express

locations and facilities today. It was not all that unusual for a full-service carwash to wash as many as 250,000 cars annually.

New people coming into the carwash industry not only find that hard to believe, but see the full-service side of the industry as a dying business. In fact, many who have remained faithful

to the full service side of the business have become disenchanted with this business model.

Granted that it is more difficult to hire long-term employees than it was 50 years ago, this is only a small part of what is wrong inside the full-service segment, in my opinion. While for sometime I had been meditating on these issues from a marketing prospective, I had not reached any conclusions as to why this segment of the industry was so precariously positioned for the future.

A recent series of events, however, brought a new series of thoughts to mind that I believe point to the industry-wide change in the public's view and use of the full-service model.

There is a video recently circulating through the Internet called "Success." This video highlights 17 very successful full-service carwashes around the 1950's and talks about various components to a full-service experience. In this video there are devices whirling about, going back and forth, making noise and spinning around.

The scenes in this video remind me of the lines from "The Grinch Who Stole Christmas" describing all the activity in Whoville.

*For, tomorrow, I know all the
Who girls and boys
Will wake bright and early.
They'll rush for their toys!*

*And then! Oh, the noise! Oh, the noise!
Noise! Noise! Noise!
There's one thing I hate! All the
NOISE! NOISE! NOISE! NOISE!*

*And they'll shriek squeaks and squeals,
racing 'round on their wheels.
They'll dance with jinglinglers tied
onto their heels.
They'll blow their floofloovers.
They'll bang their tartookas.
They'll blow their whohoopers.
They'll bang their gardookas.*

Continued on page 37...



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Take Your Equipment To The Limit, Without Limitations

By Gary Sokoloski

There are many situations where the phrase, "Take it to the limit" can be applied. In the carwash industry, many times it is used to push your equipment or manpower to wash as many cars as possible on any given day. More and more, it seems, it is being used to push your equipment or manpower to keep going day after day, and year after year. While there are many good things that can come from this outlook, remember to know the limits.

As with any piece of equipment, whether it is your lawn mower or your hydraulic power pack, make sure you know its limits and have the necessary maintenance and repairs needed to keep it running like new at the ready.

As equipment ages, there are preventative maintenance items that need to be done throughout its useful life expectancy. As that time draws near, it is even more important to go through every part of your equipment. These items get more and more critical to do as they get pushed to their limits.

The Hydraulic System

One of the most critical parts of any traditional tunnel carwash is the hydraulic system that runs the conveyor, side and top

brush or mitter. It's the heart of your system. When it is time to do major repairs such as replacing a motor or pump, look closely at all of the other components included in the system. Check and replace, if needed, any proportionating valves, as well as all of the fittings, hoses and fluid lines before a small leak becomes a blown line. When doing a major repair or upgrade in a part of the system, go over the entire system. While making the repairs to fix the initial problem, go the extra step and look at all of the parts of that system and get it running like new, so you can continue to take it to its limit.

The same approach should be taken when looking at the electrical part of your carwash. Go through the entire system and look at every conduit, junction box and connection. Age, water, and use are very tough on these components; therefore, keeping them in top running condition will add to their life expectancy and help to keep you from experiencing those nasty Saturday afternoon breakdowns.

If you are having issues with a set of photoelectric sensors or photo eyes, consider replacing all of them. The same is true for proximity sensors, lighting, and limit switches. Instead of trying to fix pieces and parts of the system as they break, replace all of the critical parts of it and get the maximum life out of your equipment.

Take the same approach when dealing with all of the smaller ancillary equipment at your carwash, as well. If you have vacuums or vending machines that seem to always need something, give them everything. Update and replace all of the major components and give them a facelift with new decals and covers. If you are not going to replace the entire unit in the near future, and anticipate taking it beyond its recommended lifespan, it is important to give your equipment the attention it needs so it can keep working properly day after day, and year after year.

Many people think that taking their equipment to the limit is like playing the lottery and hoping to get lucky. Take another look at your equipment and make the decision if it is worth rehabilitating or if it makes more sense to replace it all. There are many positives and negatives of both approaches. Consult with your service provider and make an educated decision on what to do with your aging equipment. In some cases, with some equipment, it makes more sense to just throw it all away and start over. Moreover, in a lot of cases, a complete comprehensive rebuild can be a more cost effective and reliable answer to the question. If you are going to take your equipment to the limit, make sure you do not limit your equipment. ■

Gary Sokoloski owns Centerline Carwash Sales and Service in Wales, ME. He can be reached if you have questions, comments or suggestions at 207/375-4593 Office, 774/248-0171, or e-mail gscarwash@gmail.com.



Gary Sokoloski

A Sign of the Times ... continued from page 34.

*They'll spin their trumtookas. They'll slam their slooslunkas.
They'll beat their blumbloopas. They'll wham their whowonkas.
And they'll play noisy games like zozittacarzay,
A roller-skate type of lacrosse and croquet!
And then they'll make ear-splitting noises galooks
On their great big electro whocarnio flooks!*

*Who? Who in Whoville would not come out to see such a show?
Wow! It was like going to see a five-alarm fire!
It was cheap entertainment.*

But there you have it. Automatic carwashing was new. No one had seen all this commotion before. Few had automatic dishwashers in their homes, and here was a who-hooter that could wash a car! All by itself!

But regrettably, over the ensuing years, the show has stopped. There is no crescendo. Full-service carwashing has become a commodity. It is not exciting and the show is ordinary.

If the industry wants to revive this part of our business world, and it certainly should, then we need to sit down, as an industry and determine how to put the "SHOW" back in the full-service customer experience.

Many have abandoned this market segment for the express segment. Express is viewed as easier and you know what they say, "If it were easy then everyone would be doing it"...and they are!

My hat goes off to those who have remained in the full-service business. I admire your tenacity. Now let's work as an industry, to put the show back in your business segment. ■

Perry Powell is a carwash consultant. He specializes in structuring quick turn arounds, business models, management methods and sales processes using the consumer behavioral science of Neuro-Marketing. He can be reached at 817/307-6484, perry@perrypowell.com or www.perrypowell.com.



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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

It is hard to believe that summer is pretty much over. The
Carwash Association of Pennsylvania (CAP) has had a very busy
spring and summer and we are not slowing down.

As many of you learned at our Annual Dinner, CAP entered into a six-month
contract with the lobbying firm of Long Nyquist & Associates, Harrisburg, to assist with
tax exemption legislation for the industry. Mike Long, one of the firm's partners, spoke
at the dinner about the issue and his initial strategy. Additionally, Senator Mike Folmer
gave our keynote address and did an exceptional job explaining the role of small busi-
nesses and the impediments of government on their success.

The tax exemption strategy included an amendment to existing fiscal code
or tax code legislation to be voted upon with the annual state budget in June. CAP
would ask for everything – Sales and Use tax exemption for water, electricity, chemicals,
solvents, sorbents or reagents utilized in providing the services of a vehicle wash, wax or
detailing AND exemption of a Gross Receipts Tax on carwash and wax services – with
the understanding that we would have to be flexible.

Our lobbying firm quickly helped us to gain the support of Senate Leaders,
however, his office would only agree to an amendment providing a Gross Receipts Tax
Exemption on self-serve carwash operations only – similar to the coin-operated Laun-
dromat businesses.

Senate research estimated a fiscal impact of the compromised amendment to
be approximately \$2 million – the estimated fiscal impact of a Gross Receipts Tax Ex-
emption on all carwash businesses was estimated at \$8 million. The CAP board was not
happy with this compromise, as it excluded a significant portion of our membership.

On the other hand, there were many association members who would benefit
and if the association did not agree to the compromise the industry was sure to walk
away empty handed. In the spirit of "moving the ball forward," and gaining some
ground on this issue, we continued to soldier on to secure a firm commitment from
House Leadership. While the staff of House Leadership continued to assure us that they
were "fine" with our amendment; they never made a firm commitment and in the final
hours they refused to support the Senate's efforts. CAP's amendment never made it into
the bill. I can't begin to explain my frustration and disappointment – once again our
industry comes up short-handed.

The good news is that we did garner the support of both Finance Committee
Majority Chairmen in the House and Senate, and both offered to sponsor specific tax
exemption legislation for the industry. The board agreed to take stock before engaging
any further outside services on this issue. Independently, CAP is scheduling meetings
with both Chairmen to discuss what happened, as well as the climate of any future ef-
forts on this front. We would like your opinion in terms of future CAP action. How would
you like the board to proceed?

Moving forward, we have two additional events on CAP's agenda – our
annual golf outing and picnic on September 26, and a clay shoot in October. The golf
outing is always a lot of fun, even for the novice golfer. The clay shoot is a new event for
the association and we hope it offers an additional venue for members to come out with
their families and socialize with their peers. I encourage everyone to come out and sup-
port CAP.

Keith Lutz (handwritten signature)

Keith Lutz, President
Carwash Association of Pennsylvania

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 Includes one player, tee sign
 & appropriate recognition in event materials \$ _____

Door Prize Donations: _____
 Please indicate if you would be able to donate items for door prizes

Highlights

Cumberland Golf Club, 2395 Ritner Hwy, Carlisle, PA
 Registration starts at 9:00 am
 Shotgun start at 10 a.m.
 Four-person scramble, best-ball format
 Membership Picnic 3:00 p.m.
 Networking, Announcements & Prizes for winning team
 Proceeds go to Carwash Association of PA



Please complete registration form, include your address & return with payment by September 19th, to CAP,
 430 Franklin Church Road, Dillsburg, PA 17019. Make all checks payable to Carwash Association of PA.

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Ron Manning, Splash
66 Gatehouse Rd., Stamford, CT 06902, 203/324-5400

Dave Petit, Simoniz USA
201 Boston Tpk., Bolton, CT 06043, 860/280-5620

Eric Sehl, Mighty Auto Parts
202 New Britain Rd., Kensington, CT 06037, 860/490-4413

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- *Bruce Sands Doug Newman
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- Alan Tracy Tom Mathes
- Dwight T. Winter Daniel Petrelle
- Anthony Setaro Joe Tracy
- *Steve Ludman
- *Deceased

CCA MISSION STATEMENT

The Connecticut Carwash Association (CCA) is a member-driven association: it exists solely to serve members' needs, protect members' best interests, and to be responsive to members' requests. The list of tangible CCA membership benefits is long (and growing), but the list of intangible benefits is even longer. How can you put a price tag on the camaraderie you enjoy with your industry peers? How can you place a value on having the ability to make connections on a regular basis with other carwash operators who can help you through tough times? What price would you be willing to pay to have the chance to learn from our industry's most successful operators? Stay active in your local industry trade association.

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

The typical Connecticut, hot, hazy, humid summer days faithfully returned to us this past summer. With the return of the warm weather, a portion of our customer base has migrated from our washes to their home driveways for their car cleaning needs. I believe nearly all established professional carwashes in Connecticut experience this seasonal volume slow down, partly due to an increase in self washers. What can we do to coax a portion of these cold weather customers back to our bays and tunnels?

We can wait for the state and local environmental enforcement officials to begin to enforce statutes involving the regulation of discharge of wastewater from driveway carwashing. We can wait ... and wait ... and wait. If you operate in an area where customers use well water, a more effective approach might be to remind your customers in your marketing outreach that we can help them preserve their home water resources by using ours.

I remember during the summer of 2003 we had an influx of "new" customers who specifically mentioned they were coming to our wash because of their concerns of low water levels in their wells. Remind them of our efficient water use as professional car care providers.

Another issue that sprouts up each year with the warm weather, and approaching fall, is charity carwashes. Recently, we made an "anonymous" phone call to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) expressing our concerns about the weekly discharge to the storm water sewers from a nearby charity carwash. To my mild surprise, the DEEP did respond and the charity wash hasn't returned. We also offer a charity wash program at our facility where qualifying groups can sell wash tickets redeemable at our wash and the charity or group retains half the receipts. This approach gives these groups an alternative means in which to raise funds and you gain fresh faces to try your services. In your pitch for your charity wash program, mention your wash is "green" and has little or no impact on the state's water resources.

On July 10, the Connecticut Carwash Association (CCA) with the help of FL Roberts/Golden Nozzle, and Simoniz, conducted its second installment of our detailing seminar series. A small but enthusiastic class enjoyed and learned detailing tips from the professionals. These hands-on seminars are great for the novice detailer as well as seasoned operators. It's a great opportunity for your detailers to learn and experience from some of the best in the business.

Remember to get your foursomes together and register now for our very successful 16th Annual Golf Classic being held this year at Topstone Golf Course in Windsor, CT. It's Tuesday, September 24, and I promise that the weather will be picture perfect as it was last year! You can conveniently register online at www.wewashctcars.com.

Dodged Another Bullet

Through the dedicated efforts of CCA members and our lobbyist in Hartford, we have managed to stave off attempts to add sales tax to carwashing services for another year. This is a major victory! The CCA is the ONLY organization dedicated to protecting the car care industry in Connecticut. Each year the CCA struggles to keep our membership up to support our mission. If you are not a paid member of the CCA, please seriously consider joining us in our cause to support the car care operators and suppliers across the state. If we disappear, there is nothing between you and a government aiming at becoming a bigger "partner" in your business. We help you. Now we need your help. Thank you. To Learn more visit www.wewashctcars.com.



Noah Levine
CCA President

CCA 2013 CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER 24

16th Annual Golf Invitational
Topstone Golf Course, S. Windsor
www.wewashctcars.com

OCTOBER 7-9

NRCC
Trump Taj Mahal, Atlantic City, NJ
www.nrccshow.com

DECEMBER 5

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CCA Detailing Series Continues in Hartford

HARTFORD, CT – The Connecticut Carwash Association (CCA) held the second installment in its detailing series, “Learn How to Do An Express Detail in 20 Minutes!” Wednesday, July 10, at the FL Roberts/Golden Nozzle facility on Weston Street. Facilitated by Simoniz USA’s Tom Palencia, attendees learned the skills needed to perform high-quality express services in minutes for maximum revenue. Palencia, who joined the Simoniz team in 2008 to manage their detail product route sales program in Connecticut and Massachusetts, as well as to train detail technicians on applications techniques and product knowledge, provided attendees with an exceptional two-hour hands-on program. “Tom’s knowledge is impressive,” noted CCA Immediate Past President Tony Setaro of Jet Spray Touchless in Waterbury. “Even long-time detailers can learn from him.” ■

The association’s next event is its 16th Annual Golf Classic, Tuesday, September 24, at Topstone Golf Course in S. Windsor. For more information visit www.wewashcars.com or register online.



The FL Roberts/Golden Nozzle facility on Weston Street in Hartford served as the backdrop for the second installment in the CCA’s detailing seminar series.



Simoniz USA’s Tom Palencia (center) provided a hands-on, two-hour detailing seminar on how to accomplish a 20-minute express detail profitably.





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Jet Spray Adds Oil Change Bays To Diversify Host of Services

By Alan M. Pettilo

Anthony Setaro, owner of two Jet Spray Car Wash locations in Waterbury, CT, had his carwashes running smoothly, giving customers a quality wash with stellar service, but he wanted to make sure he was wringing every ounce of revenue out of his business. Setaro decided he could improve his bottom line with an ancillary product that complimented the carwash – oil changes.

The Jet Spray location where Setaro added two oil change bays is at 610 Meriden Rd. in Waterbury. It features a 120-foot flex-service tunnel, two touchless automatics, one rollover wash, four self-service bays and a two-bay detailing shop.

“We started this location as an express wash and then it grew into a flex serve,” Setaro said. “Once we got the wash to where we were satisfied, we wanted to take all the rest of the

property and get every square foot of it to produce as much revenue as possible.”

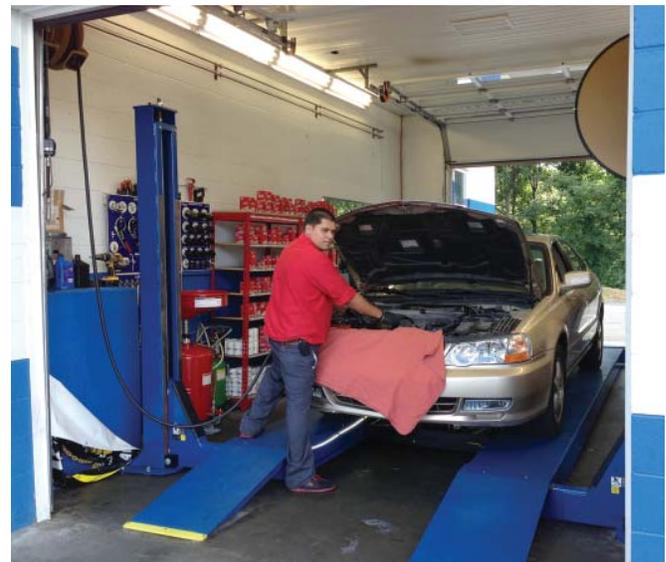
The Jet Spray location is on one-and-a-half acres, Setaro pointed out, and situated on a “fairly busy road.”

Setaro’s other Waterbury location, at 3 Chase Ave., has two in-bay automatics, one rollover and five self-service bays.

“I don’t anticipate putting in any oil change bays there,” he said, “because I have a cousin who runs an oil change facility next door to that wash.”

Putting in two oil change bays at the Meriden Road location gets Setaro back to his roots, he noted. “My family was in the oil change business years ago, but got out of it to move into carwashing,” he said. “But given the economy and our layout on Meriden Road, we decided to jump back into it.”

Continued on page 48 ...



Jet Spray owner Tony Setaro said he'd never get back into the oil change business, but now he's glad he did!



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Jet Spray ... *continued from page 46.*

Setaro finished the conversion to the two oil change bays in November 2012, and while he had low expectations, he said he's pleased that it has done well so far.

"Everyone I've spoken with says the oil change business is a slow growth," Setaro pointed out. "We've seen slow but steady gains weekly, but we're not drawing customers from other carwashes with lube shops. We're taking customers from the big box stores – there are Walmart, Meineke and Sears stores located within a three-mile radius of us."

While startup costs for an oil change facility are pretty big and more management of the business is needed, Setaro believes the long-term stability of the business will be proven.

"We've seen growth already and part of it is that big box oil change stores can't seem to give that personal feeling or attention that customers want," he said. "We've been here as a carwash for the last 20 years, so folks know we will be around for them. People like getting to know the owner and knowing there is someone responsible if there is an issue – they can come directly to me or my guys and get it squared away."

Setaro noted that his oil change shop handles Mobil One as its product line and praised Mighty Auto Parts in helping with the layout and design of the lube facility.

"I never thought I'd get back into the oil business, and said I never would again, but here I am and it's actually a good thing," Setaro observed. "And it's good that we're not drawing



The attractive facility is slowly but surely building volume.

lube customers from other carwashes. We didn't go into business to hurt someone else, but to make a profit to better ourselves and our families." ■

Alan M. Petrillo is a freelance journalist based in Tucson, AZ, a former upstate New Yorker, and contributing editor of Northeast Carwasher. He is the author of the historical mystery, Full Moon, several books on historical military firearms, and the nonfiction work, Ice Hockey in the Desert.



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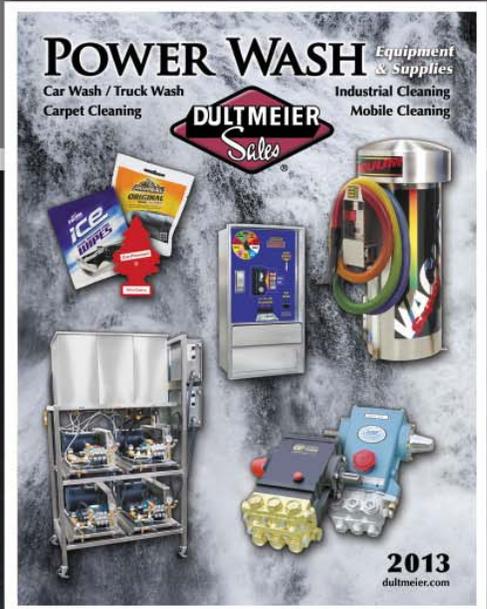
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Candidates Jump In the Ring In Preparation for 2014 Elections

By P.J. Cimini, Esq.

The 2013 Legislative Session ended in early June and it signaled the kick-off to the 2014 Connecticut Gubernatorial election. While the race is still more than a year away, candidates are already throwing their names into the ring for a chance to compete for the state's highest public office. The Republican primary is expected to draw a lot of attention with Senate Minority Leader John McKinney already announced, and it's also expected that former gubernatorial hopefuls Mayor Mark Boughton of Danbury and 2010 Republican Gubernatorial frontrunner, Tom Foley, will also enter the race.

Governor Dannel P. Malloy has not officially announced his candidacy for reelection, but all signs point to him announcing soon to seek a second term in office.

There have also been several high-profile municipal elections across the state with legislative implications in the 2013 election cycle. New Haven Mayor John DeStefano, who has held the seat for the past two decades, announced at the beginning of the year that he would not seek reelection. State Senator Toni Harp received the Democratic Town Committee's nomination and is contending against Sundiata Keitazulu, Kermit Carolina, Justin Elicker and Henry Fernandez. The primary will be held on September 10.

Mayoral races in Stamford, Norwalk, and Norwich have also received a slew of media attention and include a number of State Legislators including Democrat William Tong who is running in Stamford as well as State Senator Cathy Osteen and State Representative Brian Sears who are currently serving as both Chief Elected officials in their respective towns, as well as State Office, and will both be running again this fall for their local municipal stops.

Minimum Wage Increase

The State Legislature increased the minimum wage for the first time in many years. One of the most contentious new laws passed this year was the increase in the state's minimum wage by 75 cents an hour over two years. The minimum wage will increase to \$9 an hour by January of 2015, up from the current minimum wage of \$8.25.

Governor's 2013 Vetos

The Governor vetoed a number of bills this year, including the following public acts. The vetoed acts include:

- ❖ PA 13-100, An Act Concerning Safety and Certification Standards for the Spray Foam Insulation Industry
- ❖ PA 13-158, An Act Concerning Bail Bonds
- ❖ PA 13-201, An Act Concerning the Recommendations

of the Connecticut Sentencing Commission Regarding the Membership of the Commission

- ❖ PA 13-219, An Act Concerning Reemployment and the Municipal Employees' Retirement System
- ❖ PA 13-237, An Act Concerning All-Terrain Vehicles and the Certification of Household Goods Carriers
- ❖ PA 13-278, An Act Concerning Members of a Medical Foundation
- ❖ PA 13-284, An Act Concerning Medical Spa Facilities
- ❖ PA 13-309, An Act Concerning Employer Use of Non-compete Agreements.

Turbo-Filing Coming to DEEP

In an effort to create more efficient, user-friendly registration and filing experiences for businesses, the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) is preparing for the release this fall of a new online system similar to popular tax preparation software products.

With the new step-by-step system, businesses will not only be able to file online but also track the status of their filings and get email notifications about them.

In addition, as companies begin to answer preliminary questions, the program will customize the remaining inputs – prompting only for additional information needed for that facility based on earlier answers. And when the form needs to be renewed in the future, the program will “pre-populate” the company's basic information so that it need not be reentered into the system.

DEEP is first making this opportunity available to companies regulated under the Underground Storage Tank program as well as its Industrial and Construction Storm Water General Permit programs. Over time, the agency plans to refine and expand the system to other regulatory programs as well.

Good Unemployment Compensation News

After months of reporting on the state's stagnant job growth, Connecticut's Labor Department (DOL) recently was able to switch gears by releasing two items of good news for employers. The DOL says the federal government has reduced the interest rate from 2.94 percent to 2.57 percent on funds borrowed by the state to shore up the Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund.

Connecticut is one of 20 states that had to borrow significantly from the federal government as the recession, and the period of prolonged high unemployment that followed, deci-

mated the trust fund. Until the state pays back the money, employers are being hit with special assessments and a continuously increasing federal unemployment tax act rate (FUTA).

With the now-lowered interest rate, however, this year's special assessment will be about 20 percent less than in previous years. Last July, the state mailed special assessments at \$19 per full-time employee. This July, the special assessments will be \$15 per full-time employee.

Employers will appreciate the savings in total unemployment compensation costs over the previous year, but the true benefit will come when the state's debt is paid in full and no special assessment is needed – something DOL concedes may not happen until 2016.

Fighting Fraud

Another bit of good news is that the Unemployment Compensation Fraud Unit, created as a result of a partnership between the DOL's and the Chief State's Attorney's office, has so far charged 11 individuals with larceny and/or unemployment compensation fraud. They are accused of fraudulently obtaining benefits in a combined amount of more than \$160,000.

The increase in criminal investigations goes hand in hand with a bill passed this past legislative session (SB 909, PA 13-66) that raises the financial penalty on individuals who fraudulently obtain unemployment benefits. Employers must be aware, however, that under the new law they could be saddled

with penalties if their failure to respond to inquiries from the DOL contributes to the improper benefit payments.

In addition to financial penalties, the criminal penalty for individuals charged with larceny can be up to 20 years in prison, and the penalty for unemployment compensation fraud can be up to five years in prison. DOL also has warned that while claimants have been the primary target for their investigations, employers that misclassify their employees as independent contractors will also be the subject of future investigations.

The DOL is encouraging employers to help in the effort to combat unemployment compensation fraud. They should report the individuals they hire or rehire to the Labor Department as soon as possible. In addition, employers aware of any individual fraudulently obtaining unemployment compensation benefits should report that information through the department's website or by calling the tip hotline at 800/894-3490.

Probable Surplus Masks Ongoing Problems

Connecticut may end fiscal year 2013 with a \$236.6 million surplus fueled in large part by big – but probably one-time – gains in the state's inheritance and estate taxes. That's according to the latest estimates released July 1 by the state comptroller, with the fiscal year's complete budget story to be officially told in September.

Continued on page next page ...

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Lobbyist Update ... continued from page 51.

Late last year, with the Bush-era tax policy set to expire, many affluent people in the state made significant transfers of wealth in order to avoid higher gift tax rates as of Jan. 1, 2013. That kind of revenue windfall (helping to generate \$269.8 million above budget in the inheritance and estate taxes) is not expected to be seen again in the current fiscal year that began July 1.

Also performing better than anticipated in FY 2013 were revenues from the state's personal income tax (\$183.8 million). Sales and corporate taxes, on the other hand, underperformed by \$189.33 million and \$66 million, respectively. In his statement on the budget, the comptroller noted that the economic recovery continues to plod along. Just over three years into the recovery, Connecticut has gained back only half the jobs lost during the recession. And while job growth in the state seems to be picking up of late, the unemployment rate remains static at 8 percent.

Getting the state into better fiscal shape will have a lot to do with restoring the kind of business confidence that leads to greater investments in the state and more robust job creation.

'Transform CT' Looking for Transportation Inspiration

In an effort to develop a more "prosperous, sustainable, and livable Connecticut," Governor Malloy recently launched a new, 18-month strategic transportation initiative called "Transform CT." According to the Governor, the aim of Transform CT is to "improve economic growth and competitiveness, build sustainability, and provide a world class transportation system" in the state.

Getting there starts with ideas, and to help develop the plan, the state Department of Transportation (DOT) will solicit input from residents and businesses on Connecticut's transportation issues. The DOT is planning a series of public meetings, focus groups and surveys to engage businesses, elected officials, and transportation advocacy groups in the effort.

But hearing from the public is already happening. DOT recently launched an interactive website, that allows visitors to log in using various social media accounts, and leave suggestions about how to improve the state's transportation system.

The state's Special Transportation Fund (used by the legislature to fund transportation projects) should be used to fund transportation infrastructure maintenance and upgrades rather than being raided, as is now happening, for general government expenditures.

One source of transportation funding – revenue from the fuel tax charged to people filling up their vehicles at the gas pump (which was increased this year) – has raised more than \$2.6 billion since 2005, supposedly for transportation projects.

DEEP Making Progress, Improving State's Regulatory Climate

For years, businesses have urged the state to achieve greater compliance with environmental regulations by help-

ing companies understand and comply with them – and saving the time – consuming and expensive formal enforcement process for significant or repeat violators.

Taking a strong interest in the concept, the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) last year developed a pilot based on the agency's hazardous waste program. But launching the program required approval from the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – whose Washington, DC, enforcement office is not exactly known for innovation.

In June, however, the EPA approved DEEP's request to begin a small business enforcement policy, effective June 14. The policy allows DEEP to waive penalties for first-time violations of hazardous waste laws and regulations that are neither criminal nor willful in nature and do not pose a significant threat to human health or the environment. Many small businesses experience difficulty trying to comply with every detail of Connecticut's hazardous waste rules. The rules are voluminous and complex and get tangled up with federal hazardous waste rules.

Small businesses just don't have the resources to work through this cumbersome legal maze that changes regularly, especially at the federal level. DEEP's new policy defines small business as a business entity, including affiliates, that are independently owned and operated and employ, at the time of the initial compliance inspection, fewer than 50 full-time employees.

Specifically, the new policy allows for a waiver of the so-called gravity-based portion of a penalty (relating to the actual or potential harm associated with the violation) and requires the small business to correct the violations (through a consent order) within a reasonable period of time. DEEP still has the discretion to assess a fine if it determines the company gained an economic advantage from noncompliance.

Employer Healthcare Mandate Delayed

The Obama administration has announced that it is postponing the federal health care law's insurance mandate for employers until 2015. Under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA), employers with more than 50 full-time equivalent employees who do not provide health insurance coverage must pay a penalty. Thus, for 2014, there will be no penalties assessed for businesses that do not cover their workers. The US Treasury, which is in charge of the so-called "employer mandate," has said it will look to streamline the steps businesses have to take to show they are complying with the law to make it less burdensome. The delay in implementing the employer mandate may increase the Affordable Care Act (ACA) costs, as potentially more workers seek coverage on the healthcare exchanges in order to receive federal subsidies toward premiums. ■

P.J. Cimini, Esq. is the CCA's lobbyist and a partner in Capitol Strategies Group, LLC, in Hartford. You can reach him at 860/293-2581 or pj@csgct.com.



P.J. Cimini



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Building a More Profitable Car Wash

Signs, Wonderful Signs...

By Cookie Anthony

Need to sell extra services to increase your per car sales and profit? Need to save on insurance claims to increase your customer base? If your answer is “yes,” you need to look at signs to see if you are conveying the information and advertising you need to accomplish the above goals.

After your initial investment, signage can keep selling your business and products with no extra costs for labor, workmen’s compensation or insurance.

Signs can be hand drawn on windows, professionally made, lit or computerized. They can provide directions, help with safety, traffic flow, sell products, and attract attention to thoughtful services. Signs can help process cars and speed production but they can also add clutter, be distracting, confusing and hard to read.

Signs can sell waxes, tire cleaner, undercarriage rust inhibitor, detailing services and dent removal. They can announce Ladies Day, as well as Senior and holiday specials. They can even instruct customers on how to use equipment, help sell gift certificates and advertise monthly specials.

Can you find signs in the photos on pages 56 and 57 that show the following examples?

- ❖ Readability
- ❖ Color
- ❖ Flexibility
- ❖ One you don’t want to read
- ❖ Clean layout/design
- ❖ Instruction



Cookie Anthony

Now stop and look at your signage. How can you improve, innovate and maximize effective marketing with your signage? ■

Cookie Anthony is a former CCA Vice President and carwash owner.

Continued on page page 56 ...

Cookie’s Question To You! ?

In the book “Palace Council” by Stephen L. Carter there is a line that made me think of the Connecticut Carwash Association (CCA). It said, “Every organization of any kind can be reduced to two fundamentals – membership and money.”

Here’s my question to you, “Have you paid your dues yet? And, have you spoken to another new carwasher to encourage him/her to join as well?” Membership combined with money leads to strength, fun and learning.

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Al Villani

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

This fall CWONJ will be hosting the 24th Annual Northeast Regional Carwash Convention (NRCC) at the Taj Mahal in Atlantic City. The devastation from super storm Sandy is still fresh in most everyone's mind, and the evidence can still be seen along the Jersey Shore. Many operators were affected at their businesses as well as their residences giving them a firsthand look at the severe damage caused by the storm.

Some of these operators were displaced because of the extensive damage to their homes, operators like our board member Doug Rieck. Doug won't be back in his home until the holidays, God willing!

Operators are only a small segment of the shore's population still trying to recover. In an effort to assist all those affected the NRCC will be hosting a "Restore the Shore" benefit during the Welcome Reception at the Hard Rock Café located in the Taj on Tuesday Night, October 8, at 7pm. I would like to invite everyone in the carwash community to join us and support this worthy cause. As always the reception continues to be a place to see old friends and meet new ones! It's a great venue in which to exchange ideas, complain about the weather and this year, help out some really deserving people. To learn more visit nrccshow.com or call 800/868-8590 today to reserve your ticket.

AL VILLANI

*Al Villani
CWONJ President*



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2013 CWONJ CALENDAR

OCTOBER 7-9

NRCC

*CWONJ host association
Trump Taj Mahal, Atlantic City, NJ
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NOVEMBER 12

Fall Membership Meeting
Holiday Inn, Clark (Formerly the Crowne Plaza)
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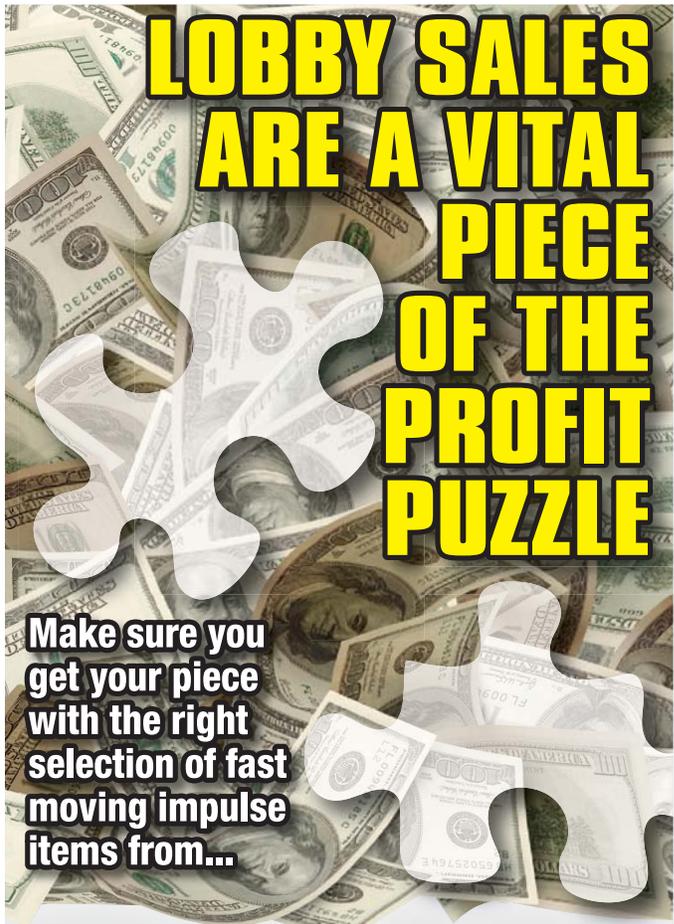
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CWONJ Giving Reaches \$42,000 For Children's Specialized Hospital

UNION, NJ — The Car Wash Operators of New Jersey (CWONJ) played some great golf and raised \$5,000 for the Children's Specialized Hospital here on Monday, August 12. To date, the CWONJ has raised \$42,000 for the hospital.

A picture-perfect day of golf was capped off by a silent auction and raffle that put a huge smile on the face of Children's Representative Kaitlin Davis. "This association has been a true friend and supporter of the hospital for many

years, and the money they raise helps us help so many really deserving children," she said. "We are eternally grateful to the CWONJ for all they do."

Children's Specialized Hospital (www.childrens-specialized.org) is the largest pediatric rehabilitation hospital in the country. It serves children affected by brain injury, spinal cord dysfunction and injury, premature birth, autism, developmental delays and life-changing illnesses



Gerry Barton and Al Villani kick off the Jersey Clean public relations program.

CWONJ President Al Villani presents Kaitlin Davis with the Children's Specialized Hospital with a \$5,000 check on behalf of the association.



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from ages two to 21. Children's Specialized has nine sites in New Jersey and treats more than 16,000 children annually from all over the country. The CWONJ has been teaming up with them since 2004, according to CWONJ President Al Villani. "This event is truly one of our most important events because of what we can do for the hospital," said Villani. "Our golfers and sponsors make our donation happen, and we are extremely grateful for that."

Another highlight of the day's event was the presentation of the association's first scholarship to Magic Wash's Ryan Clark. Clark, who is attending the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey, was presented with a \$1,000 scholarship as a result of his dedication to his education, as well as his strong work ethic as has been demonstrated to employer Doug Rieck. "Ryan is a smart, hardworking and dedicated employee," said Rieck. "He is always working hard and

Continued on page page 62 ...



What a Day of Golf!!!!

A great day of golf was had by all as is evidenced from the smiling faces and sunny weather! It was a picture-perfect day on the links at Suburban Golf Club in Union.



Children's Specialized Hospital ... continued from page 61.

in a professional manner. He is always willing to do whatever it takes to get the task completed. He will go on to have a successful life and career."

In addition to 18 holes of golf on the Gary Player signature course, the group enjoyed a buffet lunch and dinner, as well as a lively cocktail hour complete with passed hors d'oeuvres, before taking part in the silent auction facilitated by RSI.

The winning foursome consisted of Steve Pezzaino, Nick Chang, Anthony Boffa and Jim Diorio with a 57. Second place went to Scott Freund, Barry Hart, Chris Hart and Peter DeFazio with a 58. The winning foursome took home \$100 gift certificates from the pro shop and the runner's up got \$75 gift certificates. Men's longest drive winner was Peter DeFazio and women's longest drive went to Joni Millman. Al Rogers had the closest to the pin on hole #11 with 3'4" and Peter DeFazio had the closest to the pin on hole #16 with 3'10". Each winner received an \$85 pro shop gift certificate.

The association would like to acknowledge its vendor sponsors including: Platinum Sponsor/Buffer Reception Birchwood Insurance Group, ICS and McNeil & Co., Inc.;

Lunch Sponsor Simoniz USA; Lunch Beverage Sponsors Old Granddad and ZEP Vehicle Care; Hole-In-One Vehicle Sponsor Ray Catena Auto Group; Beverage Cart Sponsor Beckerman & Co.; Closest to the Pin Sponsors Beckerman & Co. and Rosey's Tank Cleaning; Men's Longest Drive Sponsor Stoner Inc. and Cocktail Hour Sponsor Micrologic. Panaram International sponsored the towels.

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The association's next meeting is slated for November 12 in Clark at the Holiday Inn. The featured speaker will be ICA President Mark Curtis of Splash Car Wash in Greenwich, CT.

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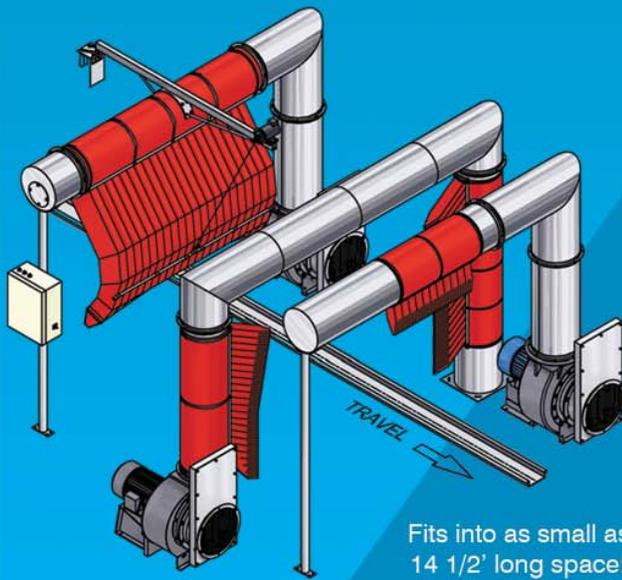
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Magic Wash's Ryan Clark Wins First CWONJ Scholarship



The CWONJ's first scholarship winner, Ryan Clark of Magic Wash in Manahawkin, was presented with a \$1,000 check by President Al Villani.

The Car Wash Operators of New Jersey's first scholarship recipient is Ryan Clark of Magic Wash in Manahawkin. Clark, who graduated from Ocean County College with an associate's degree, will be attending the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey this fall. He is a member of Stockton's Accounting & Finance Society and is a United Way volunteer doing free tax returns in their VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) Program. He has worked for Magic Wash for the last three years.

According to Magic Wash owner Doug Rieck, "Ryan is a good worker and excellent with our customers. He has been working at the wash, as well as other jobs, plus attending college part time. He is an excellent choice for this honor and will go on to a very successful life and career."

Clark was awarded his \$1,000 scholarship at the CWONJ's Golf Outing on August 12 by Scholarship Chairperson Gerry Barton.

To learn more about the award and to get an application form visit cwonj.com.

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NJ Readies to Face a Busy Election Season

By Patrick Stewart



On Monday, June 3, U.S. Senator Frank Lautenberg passed away. Senator Lautenberg still had a year and a half remaining in his term as he was scheduled to be up for re-election in November 2014. Governor Christie had many options, as he is the person to fill the seat according to the State Constitution. The Governor opted for a special election in October to fill the U.S. Senate seat left vacant, spurring an all-out sprint for the office and drawing fire from Democrats.

Within minutes of the announcement, potential candidates were rumored. The Governor set the Democratic and Republican special primaries for August 13 and the special general election for October 16. The winner of the general election will serve the remainder of Lautenberg's term, and the next election will be held, on schedule, in November of 2014.

The move was also blasted by liberal groups and the Democratic Governors Association. And it disappointed some Republicans in Washington who preferred Christie appoint a party loyalist and wait until November 2014 to hold an election. That option would have maximized the length of time the GOP would have had an additional vote in the Senate, where Democrats hold a 54-45 majority with Lautenberg's seat vacant.

But two conflicting state laws made it unclear whether Christie could wait that long, and Democrats warned that if he chose that route, they would file a lawsuit to have the election this November. Christie said he considered 2014, but opted against it.

Two Democrat Congressman have stepped up as candidates. Frank Pallone (D-6th Dist.) and Rush Holt (D-12th Dist.), and Assembly Speaker Shelia Oliver has announced her candidacy. The favorite to become the Democratic candidate is Newark Mayor Cory Booker.

On the Republican side Conservative activist Steve Longan, the former mayor of the small Bergen County town of Bogota, is the former head of the New Jersey chapter of the conservative group Americans for Prosperity and is the Lead Republican for the October 16 general election. He will square off against Dr. Alieta Eck, the 62-year-old former president of the Association of American Physicians and Surgeons, a group she likens to a "conservative AMA."

Eck came to prominence in 2011 when she gave evidence to the Senate Obamacare hearings. She is convinced, like so many others, that the president's entire healthcare overhaul will collapse under its own weight.

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While all this jockeying has taken place for the up-for-grabs Senate seat, Governor Christie assigned a Republican placeholder for the duration of 2013. He chose Jeffrey Chiesa – one of his best friends and the state’s Attorney General for the past year and a half.

Chiesa, a 47-year-old former federal prosecutor, will serve on an interim basis for five months, effective June 10, until the special election October 16, which he said he will not enter.

Plus, there is a gubernatorial race this fall! Governor Christie looks to be a lock to win his race for a second term as he takes on Democratic challengers Senator Barbra Buono. Also, all 40 members of the New Jersey Senate are up for re-election as are all 120 members of the New Jersey Assembly.

Additional Voting Dates

This summer and fall New Jersey voters will have a couple extra trips to the voting booth. Here are the voting dates:

- ❖ October 16, U.S. Senate Election day
- ❖ November 5, Gubernatorial election, State Senate and Assembly elections and local races. ■



Patrick A. Stewart is a lobbyist with Public Strategies Impact. You can reach him at 609/393-7799 or email him at pstewart@njpsi.com.

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

There are some days, maybe too few, when you just have to be grateful. It feels like Thanksgiving in the summer. This is one of those days because there is a bunch of good people in the world – doing good work, chipping in on worthwhile projects, without seeking anything personally.

I am just as pleased as can be, and proud to commend the hard work of Dan Callihan of Glen Burnie Car Wash. Dan chaired the Mid-Atlantic Carwash Associations (MCA) first region-wide event, "Wash to Save the Bay." Dan got MCA connected with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF), the most important environmental group in our region. CBF has been fighting for the health of the Chesapeake Bay for 40 years. There was something about CBF's love for the Chesapeake Bay that resonated with Dan as an avid boater. And there was something about water that struck a chord with Dan as a successful carwash operator. Without water, we can't wash cars. It's that simple.

The best news is that lots of carwash operators love the Bay, spend their leisure time on the Bay, and have many fond memories of family outings on the Bay. CBF's slogan, "Save the Bay," is easy and natural for carwash operators to get behind and feel that this is something in which they want to be involved. Twenty carwash operators signed up, representing more than 30 locations. As the final tally shows, MCA has raised more than \$7,000 for the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. This far surpasses our goal and sets the mark to beat next year.

Did you know that the Chesapeake Bay watershed area begins in New York State and runs through Pennsylvania and West Virginia? It's not just the states that border the Bay – Maryland, Delaware, D.C, and Virginia. When pollution is dumped into the waters of the watershed area, it makes its way to the Bay and affects our oysters, crabs and wildlife. The health of the Bay is truly a regional issue, and water is truly a carwash issue. Take a couple of minutes and watch this very inspiring video, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o7kB7-UN7m4>.

So, it is with great pleasure that I want to recognize the participants, listed below, for their enormous and significant efforts on this great MCA program. These are the best carwash operators anywhere. These are the best people in the world. It is for them that MCA exists. That they stepped up so generously is very inspiring for me.

We need to also raise a glass and give thanks to Pat Troy and Next Wave Group (NWG). Pat, Chris Cotter and the NWG team planned the project and stayed close to all the details right up to and after the event. They prepared banners and promotional materials that were reasonably priced and looked terrific. The "crab in the hat" logo was designed by Phyllis Saroff, and the various promotional materials were created by Kelsey Schaible. Thank you to everyone at Next Wave Group.

This magazine will hit after our September 11 MCA meeting in Hanover, MD, near BWI. I hope you were there to hear our program on Retrofitting Your Carwash and to tour Dan Callihan's Glen Burnie Car Wash. Of course, we are looking forward to seeing our MCA friends at the Northeast Regional Carwash Convention (NRCC), October 7-9 at the Taj Mahal in Atlantic City. The convention is going to blow you away. Make sure you attend the Opening Night Reception, as we will be raising money for the victims of Hurricane Sandy who are still recovering from the devastation of the storm. One of our NRCC board members, Doug Rieck, is still not living in his home and won't be back in until the holidays. Come out and show your support and help those less fortunate. To learn more and register visit nrccshow.com today!

Then on November 13, MCA meets at the Doubletree in Sterling, VA. We plan to tour some washes and have a dinner meeting and program. Remember our events are free for up to two operators per member wash. Check it out on www.mcacarwash.org.



Dave DuGoff
MCA President



Dan Callihan of Glen Burnie in Glen Burnie, Maryland, is an MCA board member and Chariman of Wash to Save the Bay. He is pictured at the association's May meeting in Warrenton, VA, promoting the effort.



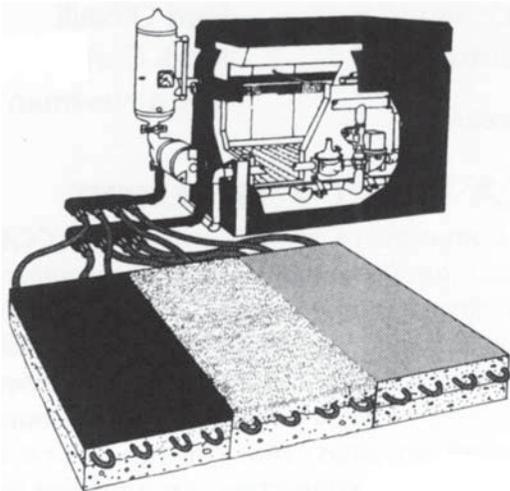
Chesapeake Bay Foundation representative Brian Wessner educated attendees of the MCA's March membership meeting in Annapolis on the great things the foundation is doing to preserve the bay and the health of its watershed.



This logo was designed by Phyllis Saroff of Next Wave Group.



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Keep winter, not people, from your door with this hydronic heating system.

Flagstop Car Wash Demos Existing Location, Erects New Express Wash

By Alan M. Petrillo

There are seven Flagstop Car Wash & Quick Lube locations in the Richmond, VA, market, but one of the sites was feeling the effects of its age and not competing as well as it should. Thus, president Bob Schrum and his management team decided to level it and start anew.

Schrum said Flagstop built the Hopewell location – an eight-bay self-service wash – in 1984, three years after it built its first carwash in Chester in 1981, a 110-foot full-service wash, and after the purchase of an existing Petersburg carwash that was sold in 2006.

“Over the years the Hopewell location ended up with 15 bays of self-service sites within a one mile radius,” Schrum pointed out. “The site has 210 feet of road frontage, but there wasn’t the depth to the lot to convert to in-bay automatics.”

Schrum said Flagstop petitioned the city to purchase an adjacent right of way so it could tear down four bays and add a tunnel, but found that the city didn’t own the right of way, a local businessman did.

“We negotiated with him and got the right of way for a year’s worth of unlimited carwashes,” Schrum said. “At that point we decided to tear down everything, but kept the sign and flagpole, for which we’re known, and put up a 105-foot tunnel express wash. This highway has a perfect criteria for a carwash placement, seeing between 15,000 and 18,000 vehicles past it each day.”

Flagstop Car Wash’s structures all have the same identity with a large tower, copper-colored metal roofs, prefinished split face block construction and a 20 x 30-foot US flag flying out front. Schrum pointed out it costs between \$5,000 and \$8,000 yearly to pay for the flags and their associated lighting for each location.

Schrum noted that one of the highlights of the new express wash is that he installed all LED lights, inside and outside, at the location. “They’re expensive up front, but we think they will pay for themselves in 18 months,” he said. “We are seeing tremendously low electric bills compared with our other locations.”

Jamie Nestor, executive vice president of Flagstop and president of distributor Old Dominion Car Wash Services, noted it is important to research the area and potential market or a carwash could be doomed to failure.

“You have to invest a lot of time, effort and energy to make sure you are investing your money properly,” Nestor said.

Nestor noted that Flagstop has an unlimited wash plan that is sold monthly and charged to a customer’s credit card.

“We don’t have long-term contracts,” he pointed out. “It’s done very well for us because by giving customers the monthly option we have increased use in the program. Also, there is no fee to join the program.”

Besides the carwashes in Chester and Hopewell, Flagstop has locations in Chesterfield, Colonial Heights, West End and



This state-of-the-art wash was torn down and created anew. What a fabulous job on behalf of owner Bob Schrum!



Glen Allen, VA, two full service and two express washes.

While Flagstop has placed a good deal of newspaper, couponing and television ads, Nestor has moved the company more into Internet marketing and direct mail.

"We use coupons out of necessity," Nestor said. "We're not a big fan of them, but do them to push our top packages. Most of our promotions push our monthly carwash club."

Flagstop also has a new mover program. When an individual changes zip codes, Flagstop gets that information from a third party source and sends the moving party a package with a free carwash in it.

"We have a QR code on it so we know who brought the freebie in," Nestor said. "Then we send them a follow-up, thanking them for visiting and giving them another freebie. If they come in again, we send them a third one."

Nestor said Flagstop has a 25 to 30 percent return rate on its new mover program.

"These packages go out individually, personalized to the person," he said. "They know it's not junk mail. And we are getting about 60 of them returned every month."

Nestor noted the QR code is a square bar code that contains marketing information such as a name, address and other data embedded in the code.

"It can store any type of information," he said. "It can be a website or address or something else. It's like a bar code on steroids."

Crisp, easy-to-read signage, attractive vac stations and a spotless facility bring in customers to the newly rebuilt Flagstop Car Wash in Hopewell, VA, a Richmond suburb.

Nestor said that Flagstop also has had success with the U.S. Postal Service's EDDM program, Every Door Direct Mail.

"For our grand opening at Hopewell, we produced an 11 x 15-inch postcard with our menu on one side and the grand opening information on the other," Nestor said. "It offered a free carwash on that weekend. It was cloudy and raining and we still did 1,500 cars in two days at this brand new site." ■

Alan M. Petrillo is a freelance journalist based in Tucson, AZ, a former upstate New Yorker, and contributing editor of Northeast Carwasher. He is the author of the historical mystery, Full Moon, several books on historical military firearms, and the nonfiction work, Ice Hockey in the Desert.



MCA CALENDAR

OCTOBER 7-9

Northeast Regional Carwash Convention
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Atlantic City, NJ
Nrccshow.com

NOVEMBER 13

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Adam Korngold

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Solutions@TheAssociationAdvantage.net
www.TheAssociationAdvantage.net

NECA

591 North Avenue, Suite 3-2
Wakefield, MA 01880-1617
781/245-7400 • fax: 781/245-6487
info@newenglandcarwash.org

WWW.NEWENGLANDCARWASH.ORG

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Over the last year, the New England Carwash Association (NECA) has worked hard to define our mission. We have worked on a mission statement, a tag line, and conducted a seminar to focus on a long-term strategy for the association.

Our New Tag Line: Come Clean With Us

One of the most valuable opportunities that members have through networking with other carwash owners is sharing their ideas and experiences with others to improve our businesses. When I opened my carwash in 2006, I was new to the industry and was surprised by the willingness of the members to share ideas. After seven years in the business, I still learn new ideas at every meeting, and I have heard from industry veterans that they still learn at each meeting as well.

We know that it is impractical for all of our members to attend our meetings. Networking is certainly not limited to attending a meeting. We encourage our members to network through LinkedIn, Facebook, and by directly contacting other members.

The most important word in the tagline is "Us." Working together we can accomplish more. We have been aggressively working to bring services to our members such as group buying programs. We have recently negotiated a deal with a social media company to work with our members at a heavily discounted price, because of our large buying power.

Many of our members have expressed an interest in expanding their social media presence, but were unsure how. Social media marketing and monitoring is incredibly important, but also expensive and confusing. We are excited to announce a partnership with Pulse Network of Canton, MA. The NECA formed a committee to investigate qualified social media companies and negotiate a discounted price because of our buying power. Pulse provides a high-quality service that is significantly discounted from other local businesses.

Another exciting opportunity for members is to sell carwash gift cards and coupon books directly online through a common directory. You can now sell wash books online, with the funds going directly into your current merchant account. The NECA has designed a website, carwashgifts.com, that offers our members four valuable services: Sell carwash gift cards online; Directory of members who are offering online gift cards; Has a discounted Groupon-type buying structure that allows carwash owners to email a specific offer for a limited time at a discounted price; Carwash owners and managers can send a complimentary wash to any email address. If you have an unsatisfied customer, or want to send a free carwash to a friend, just type in the email address.

The website integrates with most POS systems and is easy to use. We are really excited to officially launch the website at our November 12 meeting.

I am very excited that the NECA's members are on a mission to work together, collaborate on ideas, and innovate through social media and Internet marketing.

As always, I encourage you to attend our upcoming November meeting. I will be working on 2014 committee assignments this Fall, so please contact me and let me know if you would be interested in helping lead our members to "Come Clean With Us."

Adam Korngold
NECA President

Save the Date



Fall Meeting, Dinner, Program
Tuesday, November 12, 2013

What Have You Done
for Me Lately?

Learn about new NECA programs
to help you build business and engage your customers.



Water and Oil Mix Nicely For Autobath



By Alan M. Petrillo

One might think that running a carwash and a heating oil company at the same location is a bit like trying to mix water and oil, but for a New Hampshire operator, having the two businesses on the same property has worked out just fine.

Alan Davis is president of H.R. Clough Inc., a company that delivers oil, propane and motor fuels, as well as installing and servicing all types of oil, gas and alternative energy systems. He also operates Autobath Car Wash on the company's spacious headquarters property in Contoocook.

Autobath Car Wash features two touchless automatic bays and two oversized self-service bays that can accommodate vans, campers, boats, buses and tractor-trailers. The facility also has a dog wash and two vacuum islands.

Davis points to a couple of ways that the two businesses benefit each other.

"We wanted the carwash business to be self-sustaining and know that carwashes in the Northeast are pretty energy dependent," Davis said. "But we are in the energy business, so Autobath is heated by oil-fired radiant heat. We sell the oil to ourselves with no markup."

In addition, H.R. Clough's reputation for stellar customer service has had a spillover effect at Autobath Car Wash, Davis maintained.

"Customer service is extremely important in our business because people trust us to go into their houses to deliver or fix equipment," Davis said. "We run the carwash in the same way and if someone has an issue or a problem, we give them a second carwash free."

Davis pointed out that with Autobath, he saw an easy transfer of the customer service provided by Clough employees.

"We were more worried about loyalty of customers when we got started, not about the numbers," Davis said. "We want people to come here and try us out because we know they will have a good experience 99.9 percent of the time."

Another advantage of the energy company-carwash synergy is that Autobath washes vehicles year round with 120-degree water.

"It doesn't cost much more to make hot water, even in summer, than to wash with cold water," Davis observed. "And the proof is that our rate of failure when we wash a vehicle is about one-tenth of one percent."

Davis built Autobath Car Wash seven years ago and put it through a major renovation three years ago. He's also in the process of converting the two self-serve bays to take credit cards, like the in-bay automatics do, in addition to accepting bills, coins and tokens.

"Our fleet of vehicles is the pride of our company (Clough)," Davis said, "so it made sense for us to build a carwash here because there was no other wash facility within 15 miles. We owned the land, it is served by municipal water and sewer and we're a stone's throw from the center of town, which has about 5,500 people."

Davis said that H.R. Clough, having been in existence for 70

years, was a well-known entity in the area.

"Everyone knew who we were and how we operated," he said, "but when we went for permitting for the carwash, we started from the beginning with a water recycling program, which was well received by the town."

Autobath uses a Con-Serve recycling system and Davis notes the carwash recycles about 75 percent of its water.

"Water is cheap and sewer is expensive, so it makes economic sense to conserve water and return less to the sewer system," he said. "And besides, people like to know that we're doing the right thing." ■



Alan M. Petrillo is a freelance journalist based in Tucson, AZ, a former upstate New Yorker, and contributing editor of Northeast Carwasher. He is the author of the historical mystery, Full Moon, several books on historical military firearms, and the nonfiction work, Ice Hockey in the Desert.

TREASURER'S REPORT New England Carwash Association Jan. - June end of 3rd Q 2013

Income	
Interest Income.....	72.79
Meetings.....	17,231.67
Member Services.....	60.00
Membership.....	14,923.33
NRCC.....	14,332.95
Scholarship.....	\$300.00
Total Income.....	\$46,920.74
Expenses	
Board Expenses.....	1,139.21
Insurance.....	1,197.23
Management Services.....	18,213.23
Meetings.....	14,746.46
Member Services.....	1,687.49
Membership.....	\$512.47
Office Expense.....	\$2,010.15
Professional Expense.....	\$1,675.00
Total Expenses.....	\$41,181.24
Net Income.....	\$5,739.50
Other: Washforacause	
Donations.....	\$1,390.00
Distributions to car washes.....	(\$519.80)
Administrative Expense.....	(\$376.29)
Administrative Income.....	(\$111.12)
Distributions to Campaigns (campaigns are still active).....	\$0.00
	\$382.79
Cash Balances	
Citizen's Bank Savings.....	\$174,220.35
Citizens Checking.....	\$25,464.11
Total Checking / Savings.....	\$199,684.46

2013 NECA Scholarship And the winner is ...



Danny Blackman, who just graduated from Cornell University, and will be attending the University of Virginia Law School this fall, is the NECA 2013 scholarship re-

ipient. His name should sound familiar to many. Danny has been our legislative report intern for the past several years, and has done a great job, every month, of filtering through the proposed legislation and regulations for MA, NH, ME, RI and VT. He played a key role in preparing written material when The New England Carwash Association (NECA) was addressing a proposed sales tax on carwashes in Rhode Island.



Yvonne and Danny Blackman, Danny's professor and Steve Blackman.

Danny's mother, Yvonne, has served on the NECA Board and is active in the family carwash, Blue Wave Car Wash in Middletown, RI. The wash is managed by David Blackman, Danny's brother.

Danny was an outstanding undergraduate student, described by one of his professors as an "extraordinary young scholar," and we're confident he will be equally successful in law school and beyond. ■



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Scrubadub Auto Wash Honored With Family Business Award

By Alan M. Petrillo

Family-owned and operated Scrubadub Auto Wash Centers, headquartered in Natick, MA, has been bestowed the 2013 Central Massachusetts Family Business Award by the Worcester Business Journal. In 2011, it was runner-up in the Massachusetts Family Business Awards.

Bob Paisner, Scruba-dub's chief executive officer, said the family was honored by the award and the recognition it brings. The Journal gave out six family awards to family businesses based on the size of their companies.

"Our mission is to perpetuate our family business," Paisner pointed out. "We want to promote our business and move through into another generation."

Besides Paisner, his brother Dan serves as company president and nephew Matthew Paisner is business development manager. Scrubadub Auto Wash was founded in 1965 by the patriarch of the family, Marshall Paisner, making it three generations strong. Scrubadub has 17 locations featuring flex- and express-serve carwashes, some with gasoline stations and convenience stores, in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Maine.

"When my father retired from the business, he wrote a book, 'Sustaining the Family Business,'" Bob Paisner said. "It's about the importance of passing along a business to succeeding generations, instead of cashing it out. He's now 83 and healthy, and still has a desk in our business for his use when he's in town."

Paisner pointed out that several family-owned carwashes in the Northeast have cashed out in the past year, that is, made the decision to sell their businesses instead of passing them along to the next generation.

"All of them had children in their 20s," Paisner observed, "but obviously there are many variables an owner must consider between making a sale or passing the business on to family."

Paisner said the Scrubadub family policy is that a family member can work for the business from his teens until graduating from college, but then must work somewhere else for a minimum of one year.

"We want them to interview, get hired, work for another boss, learn what it's like to work for a different company and learn something to bring back to our business," Paisner said. "For example, Matthew worked two years on Wall Street, got his MBA and came back to us at age 27."

Paisner has three sons. The oldest, Alex, is 25 and has worked the past three years for a small company that places college students in international summer intern programs around the world. His son Ian, 21, graduated from the University of Vermont this year and plans on taking the summer to relax and then get a job in the fall. His youngest, Connor, is

Dan, Matthew, Marshall and Bobby Paisner proudly join arms in celebration of the recent honor bestowed upon the family-run ScrubADub operation based in Natick – the 2013 Central Massachusetts Family Business Award by the Worcester Business Journal. Three generations of Paisners are pictured here. Congratulations!



14 and will be starting his sophomore year in high school in the fall.

"Business is hard enough, but adding family members to it also is hard," Paisner observes. "However, the challenge lies in integrating the family member so they contribute to the overall business." ■

Alan M. Petrillo is a freelance journalist based in Tucson, AZ, a former upstate New Yorker, and contributing editor of Northeast Carwasher. He is the author of the historical mystery, Full Moon, several books on historical military firearms, and the nonfiction work, Ice Hockey in the Desert.

NECA Member Benefit Legislative Monitoring

Do you have the time to regularly research activity in your state legislature for bills and regulations that might affect your business? Of course not. That's why NECA employs an intern to monitor legislative activity in MA, ME, RI, NH, and VT – all of the states we represent. Our legislative intern provides monthly reports on pertinent activity that either you will want to address or that NECA will address on behalf of the industry. There reports are published in the quarterly NECA E-Newsletter (for members-only); in the NECA News Brief, which is distributed every other month to everyone for whom we have an email address; and archived on the NECA web site.

In addition, in each of the states we represent, we have a grassroots monitor, a member who has volunteered to keep us apprised of important issues. We encourage all of you to be our eyes and ears on the ground. We can do so much more together than individually. ■

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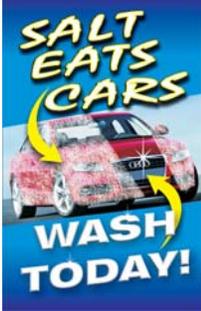
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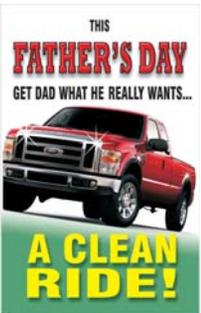
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Questions? 781/245-7400
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5



6



7



8

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Members: \$15 (was \$45) for each individual sign **Non members:** \$25 (was \$55) for each individual sign

Shipping and Handling: Please call for shipping rates if not in the NE region (MA, NH, CT, RI, VT, lower ME), Orders within New England - Please add \$30.00 S/H for signs 1-8; \$60.00 S/H for signs 9-16 and so on.

Note: Signs are shipped when payment is received in full. You can save the cost of the S/H by picking up your signs. Please call for details.

To order, complete the attached form and mail with your check, payable to NECA or fill in credit card info below.

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TOTAL SIGN COST \$ _____ PLUS \$ _____ S & H _____ TOTAL \$ _____ ENCLOSED

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SPECIFY SIGN #(s) AND QUANTITY OF EACH INDIVIDUAL SIGN (EX. 2 OF #3) _____

TOTAL SIGN COST \$ _____ PLUS \$ _____ S & H _____ TOTAL COST \$ _____ ENCLOSED OR CHARGE MY CREDIT CARD

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Everyone Won At the 2013 NECA Table Top



The New England Car Wash Association's (NECA) Table Top motor coach tour, May 21, featured five first-class washes. These included: Teen Challenge Star Shine Carwash in Brockton where tour goers also enjoyed a buffet lunch; Prestige Car Wash and Detail Shop in Taunton; Crossroad Convenience in Seekonk; Big Blue Car Wash in Fall River and Wash "N" Depot Car Wash in Easton.

At the conclusion of the tour attendees returned to the Holiday Inn in Dedham where they visited exhibits set up by 33 distinct companies and enjoyed a very generous, all-you-can-eat Italian buffet. Sue and Paul St. Hilaire, exhibit judges, chose the following award exhibit winners.

Best in Show

The ZWash exhibit used its space well, including the floor, to clearly and attractively define the company's product line, mission and brand. Little touches like a faucet over a pot of flowers added a flash of color, and reinforced their environmental message. The prize: \$100 Capital Grille gift certificate.



ZWash's Leo Zona took home Best in Show for his great use of space and design.

ZWash Systems offers customized water filtration and reclamation solutions for every type of carwash and detailing facility. They are New England's manufacturer's representative for SoBrite Technologies.

For more information contact Leo Zona at 617/633-1700 or info@zwashsystems.com

Most Eye-Catching Display of Otherwise Mundane Products

Haleware built an exhibit specifically for the table top show out of a bed frame. It was festooned with some of their products and signage that created a lively and inviting effect. The prize: \$50 Cheesecake Factory gift certificate.

Haleware, a family-owned business, is a wholesale supplier of custom, energy efficient LED lighting solutions. They recently added ground engagement tools to their product and service line.

For more information contact Jared Hale at 978/317-0112 or jared@haleware.com

Triad Design's Chuck White took home the "Most Effective Response to the Show Theme" award. For his innovation he took home a \$50 gift certificate.



Most Effective Response to Show Theme: "Solutions"

Triad's Bill Breakers, the product itself, is the solution and was front and center of this simple and interactive exhibit. The prize: \$50 popular restaurant group gift certificate.

A Bill Breaker simply accepts a large bill (and now coins) and breaks it into smaller denominations, an easy way to get the proper change in your customers' hands. Units can be pre-programmed to dispense exactly what combinations of currency, coin and/or tokens you want dispensed. It is completely flexible!

For more information contact Chuck White at 978/952-0136 or chuck.white4@verizon.net

Jennifer Jasilli, of ERC Wiping Products, was the lucky winner of the exhibitor appreciation drawing for a \$75 gift certificate for Legal Seafood.

Continued on page 80 ...



The Haleware company earned praise for its "Most Eye-Catching Display of Otherwise Mundane Products" at the table top event.

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Those who attended the table top also were winners. Our generous exhibitors provided the following raffle prizes:

- ❖ Alpha Chemicals, 5 gallons of product, won by Chris Mathews, Integra Car Wash.
- ❖ Autowash Supply Co., Black and Decker Variable Jig Saw, won by Brian Messina, RoyalT Car Wash.
- ❖ C.A.R. Products, Home Depot Gift Card, won by Joe Scroggins of Burton Car Wash.
- ❖ Car Washing Systems, Inc., Home Deport Gift Card, won by Donato DePinto, New England Carwash Equipment.
- ❖ ERC Wiping Products, 2 packs of 16 x 16 microfiber towels, won by John Shalbey, Rojo.
- ❖ Haleware, LED ice bucket/champagne chiller won by Paul St. Hilaire, St. Hilaire Car Wash.
- ❖ Michael Geller Distributors, car freshener fit pack, won by Rick Hudon of Burton Car Wash.
- ❖ National Ticket Company, Best Buy Gift Card, won by Jeff Panich, Allston Car Wash.
- ❖ Ocean State Oil, Paw Sox box seat tickets for a fireworks night, won by Dennis Medina, Car Wash Pros.

- ❖ Ryko Solutions, Lowe's Gift Card, won by Chris Becker, RoyalT Car Wash.
- ❖ Simoniz USA, Best Buy Gift Card, won by Jose Guzman, Triple Play Car Wash.
- ❖ Trans-Mate Products, two of Trans-Mate's new Maestro Detailing starter kits, won by Rick Hudon, Burton Car Wash, and Neil Freedlander, The Clean Machine Car Wash.
- ❖ ZWash Systems, Red Sox tickets, won by Ron Bousquet, Randy's Car Wash.

We would be remiss if we didn't again offer very special thanks to our generous sponsors:

- ❖ **Tour and Major Show Sponsor:** Autowash Maintenance Corp.
- ❖ **Major Show Sponsor:** Innovative Control Systems (ICS)
- ❖ **Supporting Sponsor:** Car Wash Insurance Program offered by McNeil & Company. ■

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Walt Hartl

OFFICERS

Walt Hartl, president

Hoffman Car Wash, Albany
518/527-4202 • whartl@hoffman-development.com

Paul Vallario, vice president

Westbury Personal Touch Car Wash, Westbury
516/333-8808 • foose77@optonline.net

Timm Baldauf, secretary

Advanced Car Wash Systems, Voorheesville
518/765-2078 • Timm.B@juno.com

Mike Benmoschè, treasurer

McNeil & Co., Inc., Saratoga Springs
518/588-6829 • mbenmosche@mcneilandcompany.com

BOARD MEMBERS

Rodney Bronson

Hoffman Car Wash, Albany
518/869-3218 • rbronson@hoffman-development.com

Jake Collison

Simoniz USA
978/518-0018 • jcollison@simoniz.com

Christian King

KNC Holdings, Albany
518/783-2100 ext 5 • cking@clean2o.com

Mark Lyfsyk

Ryko Mfg.
774/289-9914 • mlyfsyk@ryko.com

Steve Weekes

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518/383-8126 • sweekes@nycap.rr.com

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Suzanne L. Stansbury
Ph/F: (518) 280-4767
mediasolutions@nycap.rr.com
P.O. Box 230, Rexford, NY 12148

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

I recently needed to travel to a very, very small town in the Midwest. Getting to where I needed to be required that I take a few different flights through a few different airports, a couple of rental cars and a hotel or two. This excursion turned out to be quite an "adventure" filled with opportunities for employees of these various companies to demonstrate their ability to solve customer issues.

As in all businesses, even ours, things happen and we have been taught, trained and preached to over the years about how to best handle these "moments of truth." We have been told how we react to problems and the way we deal with them can be the difference between retaining a customer for life, a "Raving Fan" if you will, or someone who complains to us about their experience or even worse the customer who just never comes back and never gives us an opportunity to correct the problem.

My adventure began with a text message from my airline at 5:30 am that my 8:00 am flight would be delayed and thus I would miss my connecting flights. After a quick phone call (after I navigated through the maze of automatic prompts) a real person apologized and helped me re-route my trip. I would now leave much later but still would arrive in time. Once in the air, the rest of the trip went well. I arrived at the airport, retrieved the luggage and headed to the rental car counter. My "pre-paid" car was supposed to be waiting, but there was a "system problem" so all the information had to be re-entered, the associate "Debi" was very apologetic and worked quickly to get the rest of the info in so that I could be on my way.

She mentioned that this happens from time to time and it always seemed to happen at night, according to Debi, when most people were the "crankiest," go figure! It was hard to be angry at Debi, it wasn't her fault and she was doing the best she could. Once in the car, I began the hour and a half drive to the hotel. Arriving eight hours later than I had originally planned, I checked into the room looking forward to some sleep (I've been up since 5:30 am after all!).

Upon checking in I found my room, a suite in a very nice hotel, had an overwhelming odor of cigarettes. I had requested a non-smoking room. I checked the doorplate and it was a non-smoking room. I headed back to the desk and requested a new room. I expected to have trouble; the hotel was hosting a large family reunion so I was not hopeful that I could change rooms. The young lady at the counter apologized and after some looking she found me a new room. She apologized and gave me the new keys and said the cleaning staff should have noticed that when they were prepping the room.

I made it to the event in plenty of time and as I headed back to the



airport I again experienced a string of delays, cancelations and changes. I finally sit down in my seat on the final leg home and the flight attendants announce that there are 11 passengers that we are waiting for from another flight. I was on the last plane back to Albany and they didn't want to leave them behind. The captain announced an update every few minutes for two hours as we waited and waited. The worst part was that they were on the ground 200 feet away waiting to pull into a gate that was occupied. There was an open gate right next to us, go figure. Finally, the captain said they were repositioning the gate to get those people off and on our plane. I arrived at my door at 2:30 am.

In each of these cases the people involved representing their companies did an excellent job or making a bad situation better. They were helpful, understanding, accommodating and eager to help resolve my issues, and they were great! I think it's time we take a step back and look at the root causes, though. It is inevitable that things will happen, systems will fail, people will make mistakes, and processes may need to be revisited. There is a slogan for a national disaster recovery company that says, "Like it never even happened." I encourage you to continue to train, teach and preach customer service, however, let's look at what events cause us to have to handle these difficult situations in the first place. Ask yourselves, can a customer get in touch with us easily? Do I have a complicated phone system or website that makes it difficult for customers with problems to reach a real person for help? Do I have a process in place to return calls or emails promptly and do all my systems work all the time? Do I empower my people to work around the "rule" to solve problems more quickly? Take a look around and ask what things would be like "if it never even happened."

Walt Hartl
NYSCWA President

Profit & Loss

January - July, 2013



Income

Meetings Income	11,945.00
Membership Dues	14,580.00
Northeast Convention Income	14,332.50
Promotional Fees	691.83
Services	418.00
Vendor Sponsorships	2,800.00

Total Income **\$44,767.33**

Gross Profit **\$44,767.33**

Expenses

Credit Card Fees	801.69
Director Fees	11,250.00
Insurance Expense	1,425.00
Legislative Fees	8,000.00
Meetings Expenses	14,025.24
Office Expenses	218.99
Postage Expense	214.28
Printing/Graphics	367.75
Professional Services fees	250.00
Telephone	324.25
Travel	180.10
Website Maintenance	850.00

Total Expenses **\$37,907.30**

Net Income **\$6,860.03**

NBT Checking Account Balance **\$22,163.02**

NBT Money Market Balance **\$43,923.76**

Total Cash on Hand **\$66,086.78**

Mike Benmoschè is with McNeil & Co., Inc. You can reach him at mabenmosche@mcneilandcompany.com

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Payment Discrimination at the Wash Still Exists

By William Y. Crowell, III



The application of sales tax to carwash services in New York State remains a source of customer complaint. Customers are often irritated by the fact that they are charged sales tax based solely on their use of a credit or debit card.

A self-service wand carwash and a self-service in-bay automatic carwash are exempt from sales tax when the customer inserts coins, currency or tokens. The same self-service wand carwash or in-bay automatic carwash are subject to sales tax when the customer inserts a credit or debit card to pay for the services, versus currency, coins or tokens.

Customers often question the carwash operator about the correctness of this situation. To the customer, this represents discrimination based on the form of payment. There is no rational basis for distinguishing between placing six dollars in the payment mechanism or inserting a debit or credit card

to receive an in-bay automatic carwash. As a consequence, the carwash operator can only respond to the customer by referencing the Department of Taxation and Finance's Tax Bulletin ST-105, which highlights the difference in sales tax.

Blaming the situation on the State, however, does not satisfy the customer. New York State has a number of nuanced situations in the application of arcane sales tax definitions. Twix, for example, is taxed as candy if sold individually but is not subject to a sales tax when sold by the box.

Governor Paterson vetoed legislation put forward by the New York State Carwash Association (NYSCWA) and sponsored by Senator James Seward and Assemblyman Joseph Morelle to rectify the disparate treatment of payment methods by the current law. Governor Paterson began his veto message with a positive approach, as follows, "While the bill appears to have a commendable purpose – to provide greater convenience for consumers without imposing additional burdens on carwash businesses to collect sales tax – it raises several issues of concern." The veto message went on to cite a negative fiscal impact of approximately \$4.6 million to state and local finances; also, that this would constitute a precedent for similar sales tax exemptions; and finally, that it was not in accord with alleviating the hardship of sales tax collection because of coin denominations.

While the negative arguments made in Governor Paterson's veto message regarding this legislation will be raised again, it is up to the industry to attempt to challenge the underlying assumptions and focus on the positive arguments for implementing change. There are questions about the accuracy of the amount of revenue attributed to credit and debit card sales tax

revenues. In addition, the argument that sales tax exemptions should only be available where there is a hardship based on coin collection is increasingly outmoded, particularly where consumers are disadvantaged by their method of payment. The use of mobile internet contactless payments on cell phones would be discouraged by the current sales tax rules. Sales tax rules should not inhibit the use of new technology applications.

Governor Cuomo has indicated his support of small business and a desire to eliminate the anti-business mentality. The NYSCWA will attempt to work to secure passage of this legislation. It will require a significant commitment from the Association and its membership to achieve this change. ■



William Y. Crowell, III, is a partner with the Albany-based law firm of Whitman Osterman & Hanna LLC. You can reach him at 518/487-7677.

William Y. Crowell, III

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Look for photos of our
September 19 carwash
tour and fall
membership meeting
in our winter 2014 issue!

NYSCWA Hits a Home Run at Citi Field

QUEENS, NY - The New York State Car Wash Association (NYSCWA) hit a home run at its annual baseball event when the New York Mets took on the Washington Nationals, Friday, June 28. Despite a 6-4 Mets loss, the group of 65 didn't let the defeat damper their spirits, according to NYSCWA President Walt Hartl. "This is one of our best events," said Hartl. "It's a great day to bring your kids to the ballpark and catch up with fellow operators while taking in a game in the fully-loaded Empire Party Suites."

The suites are air conditioned and stocked with plenty of ballpark food including hot dogs, burgers, cheese fries and drinks. A special thanks to the following event sponsors: Grand Slam Sponsor Micrologic; Home Run Sponsor Simo-niz USA; Triple Play Sponsor Innovative Control Systems and Ball Park Frank Sponsor McNeil & Co., Inc.

A big thanks also to Mike Benmoschè of McNeil & Co., Inc. who has spearheaded the event since its inception. ■

To learn more about the NYSCWA
visit nyscwa.com.

Continued on page 86 ...



Mike Shullman of Russell Speeders brought his two sons for a great night of baseball!



Event chairman Mike Benmoschè of McNeil & Co. and Foam N Wash's Scott Baright.

Hoffman's Walt Hartl and West-bury's Paul and Sandra Vallario.



Colonial's Matt Wroblecki.

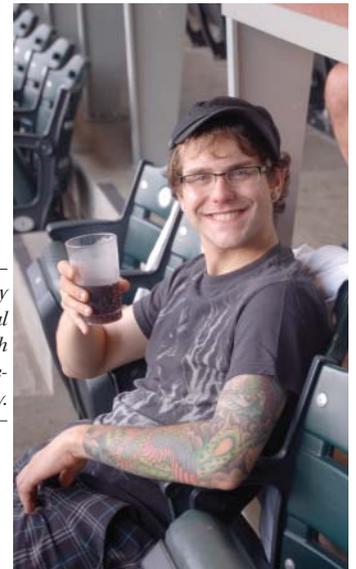


Hoffman's Rodney Bronson and Colonial Carwash's Dave Fusco.



Paul Matthews, Hoffman maintenance manager.

Josh Gary of Colonial Car Wash in Schenectady.



Citi Field ... *continued from page 85.*

*Scott Baright
and Mike and
Dave Fusco.*



Sandra and Paul Vallario from Westbury Personal Touch get a well-deserved night out!

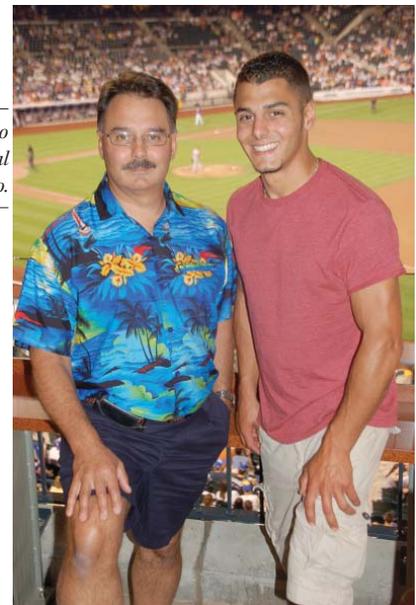


*Mike Benmoschè and
Bob Rossini yuck it up!*



Now this crew looks like they are having fun at the ball park!

*Dave and Mike Fusco
pose for their annual
father/son photo.*



The team from Schenectady's Colonial Carwash never miss the annual event!



Micrologic's Miguel Gonzalez and his wonderful kids Victoria and Antonio.

You've Got to Love Mr. Met!

These Mets lovers certainly do! A special thanks, again, to Mike Benmoschè of McNeil & Co. for spearheading this outing and personally ensuring its annual success! You rock, Mikey!





Social Networking Can Build Your Brand



Are you using social networks to build your brand and your customer's experience?

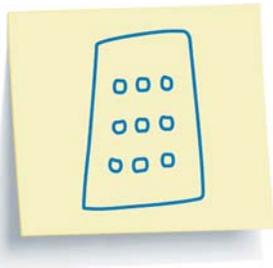
Are you using social networking to highlight your business assets and services?

Are you using social networks to make your business stand out above the rest?

Most people answer 'no'

to all of the above questions. If you are like most people then you probably think that social media only consists of Facebook and Twitter. Maybe you use Instagram or Pinterest, and I'm sure some of you have even ventured into the world of Groupon. These popular sites are considered social networking sites. While these platforms all have their place, I'd like to reach deeper into the world of social networking.

Social networking is how people connect with friends, family, and popular brands. It is simply the interaction of these people as they network online. While most of us use these sites for personal use, social media can also be used to advertise your brand and to share your services in a more enriching and interactive way. Social networking can also help your customers communicate with you as a company and share their experiences with their friends and family.



First of all it's important to realize that more and more people use social media on a daily basis. The Nielsen report claims that as of Q1 of 2012, 46% of US adults own a smartphone. The figure is 71% of all 25-34 year olds. But the fastest growing segment of the population using social media is 45-54 (according

to socialnoics.net). With the addition of iPads and Android tablets the number of users is almost growing too quickly to count. In fact, the HoffmanCarWash.com website receives at least 1/3 of its traffic via mobile devices.

The Smithsonian National Zoo and many malls are now launching mobile apps. Now you can enhance your trip to the zoo or mall just by using your smart phone. Today more than ever people are using mobile devices to enhance and enrich their lives. Carwash operators can also offer great experiences to their customers through social experiences.

What's the biggest search engine after Google?

Would you have guessed that it is YouTube?

Everyone today has heard of YouTube. Many of you even

have a YouTube app right on your smart phone. But are you using YouTube to promote your business and your services?



Of course you can always ask your greeters/staff to talk to each customer about your services, and I'm not saying that YouTube can replace that personal interaction. What I am saying is that a high percentage of people do online research about the products and services before they buy or even step foot into a storefront. Some

researchers claim 40-65% of all first-time retail customers research your company online before arriving. If your website does not include a video, keep reading. If your lobby or self-serve carwash does not include a QR code to a product video, keep reading.

About a year ago, we added YouTube videos of our detail services to our YouTube Channel. These services are explained in writing on our website, but as many of us know; most people just don't read. So to help update our website and to better explain our more in-depth services we created short videos to explain each detail service we provide. When you visit our website you have two options, you can read the detailed description, or you can just watch a YouTube video. It's as simple as posting a link to your YouTube video.

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Since 1990, most vehicles come equipped with clear plastic headlight lenses. Exposure to the sun's UV rays, vehicle exhaust, and road debris can yellow and cloud the lenses. Additionally, many lenses utilize a thin protective laminate surface-coating which is also susceptible to deterioration over time—sometimes in as quickly as 2-3 years. Conventional cleanings will not reverse lens deterioration. This service will restore your headlight lenses.

When you post your videos, make sure to post them to a YouTube Channel that is dedicated only to your carwash. The channel will provide you with a number of reporting metrics, plus it will present other services to your customer.

When a customer watches a video, YouTube automatically suggests other videos from your channel for the customer to watch. Customers may choose to watch a video regarding the hand wax service, and thanks to YouTube, they may also discover the Clay Bar service. It's a no pressure way to expose your customers to additional services. In turn you hope that they will increase their purchase and include a service or two that they may not have considered previously.



The metrics/reporting are also another great feature of a YouTube Channel. For instance the metrics tell me that 72.4% of my YouTube viewers are male. This information will help me to make the video information more relevant to the male customer. The information also tells me that 13.9% of my video viewers accessed the videos via their mobile devices. Maybe I should consider advertising my YouTube channel inside of our carwash tunnels so that customers can tune into our YouTube channel while they ride through our carwash tunnel. What better place to take a minute to learn about new carwash services?



You can also provide special links to your videos in your print advertising or right in your lobby. Many customers will scan a QR barcode while waiting for their vehicle. QR barcodes are a great way for smartphone users to scan the code and view the video immediately. You can also provide a short URL link. Keep it simple or customers won't be

able to type in the information. For example you may want to include these links/codes within your self-service bays to demonstrate how your new brush head should be used and put away. You may want to provide QR codes throughout your wash to explain the values of each service, or to highlight additional services.



Blogs – If you're not a big video person, but you would like to include some pictures and information regarding a community event or charity event on your website you may want to consider a blog. WordPress is a great place to start. Blogs don't have to be filled with lots of information; they can also be a way to share photos and to allow viewers to comment on the photos. Maybe

you want to take photos of Grace for Vets or Vets Wash Free day to share with the community. Veterans can look at the pictures and make comments directly on the blog. We get so many great comments from Veterans; it would be nice to share their comments with the community through a blog. If you are going to do a blog, please don't fill it with sales material. Use it to highlight uplifting, fun events at your wash. No one wants to follow a sales blog.

Pinterest/Picasa Photo Albums/Flicker/Instagram and more – A picture is worth a thousand words. Pictures are great, however be very cautious when posting pictures

of your customers. You don't want to show any license plate numbers or information that may identify a customer. Of course, if you have the customer's permission to use their photo, that's always great. Maybe you want your happy customers to send you pictures of their clean cars. You could put this request right on your customer survey or rating cards. Posting these pictures on an online photo viewing site would be a fun and exciting way to share these great pictures. Recently, we've seen a lot of these great pictures showing up on Instagram and Twitter feeds that belong to our customers. Of course some photo sharing sites do not include an area for comments. Some only allow comments from members of the site. So if you want to receive comments back, a photo blog may be more appropriate.

Another great set of photos to share would be to post photos of your locations as the seasons change. Customers always like to see business owners maintaining their properties. The spring and summer flowers are always popular. We even try to include a link to a PDF that highlights all of the flowers we plant during any given season. Our customers often print out the document and use it to make flower purchases at their local greenhouse. Believe me, they remember these small touches when it's time to get their car washed.



Surveys – Does your site contain a customer survey or "contact us" section? If it doesn't, you're missing out on valuable customer feedback. Surprisingly, you don't necessarily have to build these surveys from scratch any longer. There are plenty of free web survey tools available online today. SurveyMonkey.com,

Zoomerang.com, SurveyGizmo.com to name just a few. Sites like these allow you to design a great customer survey that can either be posted directly to your website, or you can provide a hyper link on your site that leads to the survey. Many sites even allow you to run reports on the feedback you receive from your customers. Today's generation is less likely to make a phone call or to approach a manager for a one on one conversation, online surveys and "contact us" forms give them the opportunity to be heard. Most importantly, they provide you with valuable feedback to improve operations and it gives you an opportunity to turn a mistake into a great experience for the customer.

"Your most unhappy customers are your greatest source of learning."

-Bill Gates, Microsoft

Continued on page 90 ...

Social Networking ... continued from page 89.

"One customer well taken care of could be more valuable than \$10,000 worth of advertising."

-Jim Rohn, Entrepreneur



The Basics – Facebook and Twitter – I'm sure by now you are surprised that I haven't mentioned the 'big two.' Facebook and Twitter remain dominant in the world of social media, although Pinterest and Instagram are on the rise. Facebook and Twitter are great ways to share information about your community involvement and

promotions. It's not always easy to maintain or to manage and it can be difficult to learn how to handle complaints from followers. If you plan to use these forms of social media, I would encourage you to do as much research as possible before you get started.

Did you know there were so many social media sites you could use on your website? There are so many free tools available to you today to help you build an interactive website and retail experience for your customers. If you just utilized one of these ideas, your website or lobby would prob-



ably be more exciting than your competitor's. Customers are looking for a company that pays attention to detail and they will happily upgrade to additional services if you highlight and explain those services well. Social Networking is a great place to start. Most of us use these sites every day. Now take what you know and use it to build your business. ■



Sara Park, Marketing Manager Hoffman Development Corp., Albany, New York.

Sara Park

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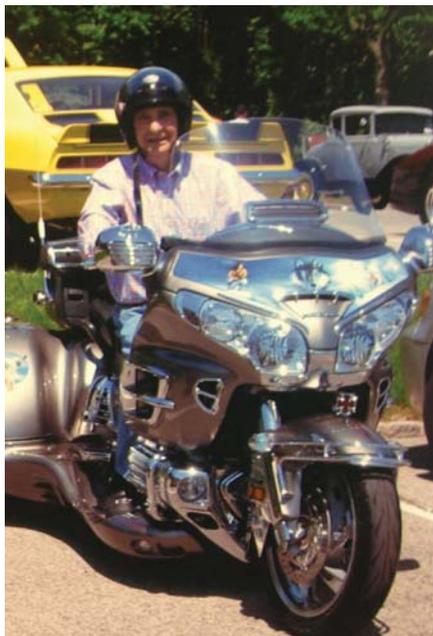
Industry Loses One of the Great Ones

“Rocco” James Dalvito, 86, died July 5 from heart complications in Mamaroneck, NY. Born here, the son of Amelia and

Loreto Dalvito, he was the youngest of three children. “Rocco” as he was known, was a life-long resident of the village and was predeceased by his wife of 42 years, Anne Numrich Dalvito, his daughter Deborah Keats McCarter, his brother Frank Dalvito and his sister Flora Mayer.

He attended Mamaroneck High School and was a veteran who fought in WWII on Okinawa Island in the Pacific Theater. His hobbies included racecar driving, motorcycles and horses.

“Rocco” Dalvito didn’t even love his motorcycle as much as he did putting out the cleanest car he could.



For most of his life he owned and operated the Dip-In Car Wash on Mamaroneck Avenue. His business was his greatest passion as was evidenced since he worked up until his death. His love of the industry and dedication to it was obvious throughout his operation and in his heart. “The carwash world has lost another pioneer,” recounts Frank Gaglio of Camp Avenue Car Wash in Stamford, CT. “When I heard of Dippy’s passing the first thing that came to mind was how much of a consummate, hard working person he was all the way up until his death.

“His ambition in life was to put out the best carwash anywhere. If there was a new piece of equipment, and he thought it would help put out a better product, then he wanted to try it. I don’t think I can remember anyone who worked harder at his wash. The man was ‘one of a kind.’”

His impact was felt by many, including local contractor Otto Rusch II. “Dippy was a deal friend whom I knew for the last 25 years,” said Rusch. “I would stop in for coffee and stories at least three to four times a month. He would always get phone calls or visitors from other operators looking for advice or just someone to complain to about the weather,” said Rusch. “He always spoke his mind, but he never had anything bad to say about anyone (except politicians in November)! He was the Tri-State Godfather. He will be dearly missed by me and others.”

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"Rocco" Dalvito (left) operated the Dip In Car Wash in Mamaroneck, NY, for much of his adult life. It was his greatest passion, according to many of his "raving fans."

Rocco is survived by his children Gregory James Dalvito of New York, NY, William Keats of Bethlehem, PA, Lisa Britton of Darien, CT, and his seven grandchildren, Tony, Alex, Emma, Danny, Amelia, Jamie and Charlotte.

To send the family an online condolence, please visit www.coxeandgraziano.com

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Ray Justice is a Western New York entrepreneur, author and personal awareness coach. He uses the theme of "Connection" in his poetry books "Whispers of Intimacy" and "Arms of Oneness" available at ThoughtCompass.com

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Should Your Wash Be Featured in the

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Welcome One and All

diFFereNT

By Ray Justice



Are you brave enough to be yourself?
Do you dare?

What does it mean to be DiFFerEnt?

Different—unusual, unlike, not identical,
or better yet, distinct.

Distinct—well-defined, individual.

Individual— a person with unique characteristics.

A distinct, unique, individual, that is what you are.

Are you working hard, trying to fit in?
Have you always felt a little different than most others?
Do we all strive to be the same?

Does everything around you seem to be working?
If you focus on the conventional, can you see possibility?
What are you missing?

Do you have the confidence to be the real you?
Why do we always want to be the same when being
DiFFerent
opens up possibilities in our lives?
Are we afraid?

Be Different, be you, be who U really are. ■

Ray Justice is an Entrepreneur, Poet & Creativity Explorer. He is a former carwash operator and past president of the New York State Car Wash Association. Visit him at Think2wice.com or email him at ray@ThoughtCompass.com.



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Doubt

It only takes
a little

So small that
I am hardly
aware

Uncertainty that
throws me off,
changes my confidence

I don't even know
it is in the room with me

I feel it in my body
but wonder
just what am I not sure about

What am I afraid of?
Is it you or
is it me?

Why am I so doubting?
Why do I have to know exactly?

Where is my trust,
My faith,
My courage,

My confidence
in who I am,
what I stand for?

I even have hesitation,
should I be
writing about doubt?

*Ray Justice is an Entrepreneur, Poet & Creativity Explorer. He is a former carwash operator and past president of the NYSCWA. Visit him at Think2wice.com or email him at ray@ThoughtCompass.com.
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OSHA Adds a New Wrinkle!

By Mike Benmoschè

Any carwash operating in the country, that has one or more employees, must comply with the general industry codes established by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

One of these regulations is 29 CFR 1910.1200 or, the Hazard Communication Program. The purpose of this is to protect all employees, contractors and vendors who may be visiting or performing work at your location from any chemical exposure.

OSHA requires that this be a written program and available to all those who may be exposed to many of the chemicals at the wash. A key part of the plan is a section dedicated to MSDS or Material Safety Data Sheets. A written document prepared by the chemical manufacturer or supplier that details the contents, hazards, proper use directives and emergency response protocol for a particular chemical.

Early in 2012, OSHA announced that they have agreed to adopt the United Nations' Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals (GHS). The intent of this was to align our country with Europe and several other countries that have elected to follow this new system. The result will make imported chemicals and ours easier to understand by having a single set of criteria for classifying chemicals according to their health and physical hazards, along with uniform formats for MSDS and container labels. By revising the standard, OSHA expects to improve the effectiveness of the Hazard Communication Plan by ensuring that employees are informed of the chemical hazards to which they may be exposed and to consequently reduce the number of chemical-related occupational illnesses and injuries. There will be a transition period beginning December 1, 2013, ending in 2016.

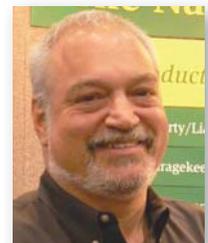
Some of the major changes are:

- ❖ Chemical manufacturers and importers are required to determine the hazards of the chemicals they produce or import. Hazard classification under the new and updated standard provides specific criteria to address health and physical hazards, as well as classification of chemical mixtures. Their analysis must fit into one of these new classifications. They will no longer be able to use their own format or wording.
- ❖ Chemical manufacturers and importers must provide a label that includes a single word, pictogram, hazard statement, and precautionary statement for each hazard class and category.
- ❖ The MSDS will be replaced with a new format that has 16 specific sections, ensuring consistency in

presentation of important protection information. It will now be known as Safety Data Sheets or SDS.

It is important to note that OSHA has made December 1, 2013, as the completion date for all affected employers to train their employees. The training agenda should be designed to bring them all up to date on the new label elements and the new SDS format.

You should contact your insurance provider for assistance in meeting this deadline if you are unsure what materials need to be presented. ■



Mike Benmoschè is with McNeil & Co., Inc., based in Cortland, NY. You can reach him at m benmosche@mcneilandcompany.com or 607/220-6344.

Mike Benmoschè

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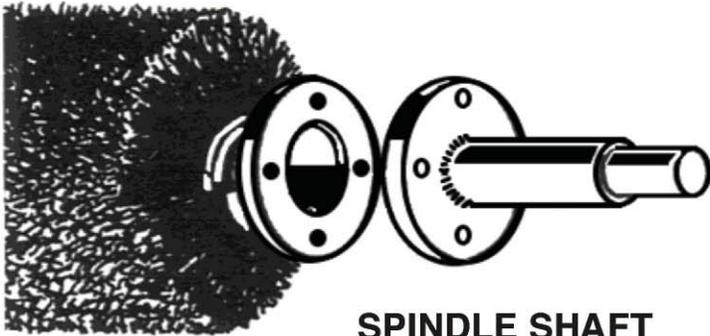
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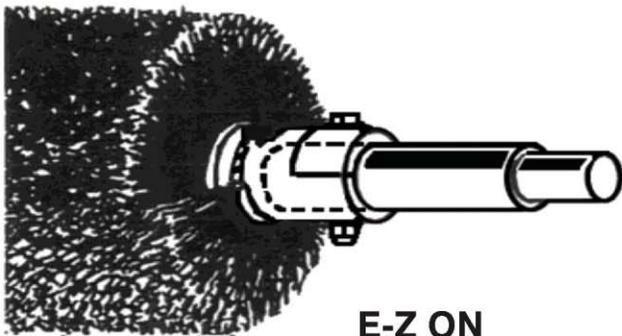
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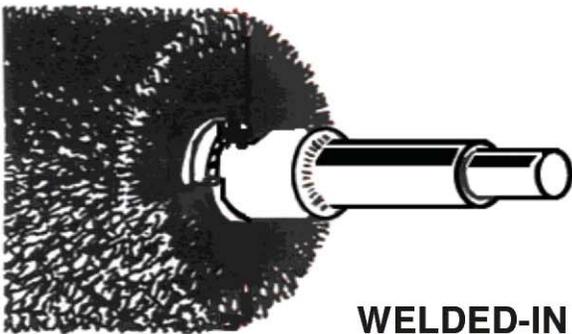
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Kelly Reilly, Owner - Kelly's Express Car Wash, Central California

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Jack Anthony, Owner - 7 Flags Car Wash, Vallejo, California

Convert a Rollover.

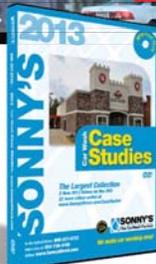


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